THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

LIBRARY
JUN 17 1946
U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

VOL. 15 — *Winter* • 1945–46 — NO. 1

The American Scholar 1932–1946	*Marjorie Hope Nicolson*
Old Adam and the Atom	*James Marshall*
An Ex-Marine Returns to Teaching	*Donald A. Stauffer*
Elegy, *A Poem*	*Irene Orgel*
What We Hope from Thomas Mann	*Albert Guérard*
Mackinder's Heartland	*Hans W. Weigert*
A Reading of Keats (I)	*Allen Tate*
Saturday in the Country, *A Poem*	*Marie Gilchrist*
A Day of War	*Howard Fast*
The Premature Death of Thomas Carlyle (1795–1945)	*Eric Russell Bentley*
Biography, *A Poem*	*Don Gordon*
Henry Adams and the Critics	*Max I. Baym*
Renan on War and Peace	*Aristide Mian*

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM

The Future of Religion

The Need for Religion and Its Truth	*Raphael Demos*
Vertical and Horizontal Thinking	*Paul Tillich*
The Autonomy of Democratic Faith	*Sidney Hook*

UNDER WHATEVER SKY — *Irwin Edman*

THE REVOLVING BOOKSTAND

Art and the Prejudicial Tendency — *Douglas Rigby*

Published Quarterly for General Circulation by PHI BETA KAPPA

$2.50 A YEAR — 65 CENTS A COPY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WJ75
.P25A5

IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO ANNOUNCE
THE PUBLICATION OF

A History of Western Philosophy

A MAJOR WORK
BY

Bertrand Russell

who writes, in his preface,

"Many histories of philosophy exist, and it has not been my purpose merely to add to their number. My purpose is to exhibit philosophy as an integral part of social and political life: not as the isolated speculations of remarkable individuals, but as both an effect and a cause of the character of the various communities in which different systems flourished."

895 PAGES • PRICE $5.00 • AT ALL BOOKSTORES • SIMON AND SCHUSTER, PUBLISHERS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Books That Are

STIMULATING—INFORMATIVE—TIMELY

Published under the Auspices of the Institute of Religious Studies

WORLD ORDER: *Its Intellectual and Cultural Foundations*

Edited by **F. ERNEST JOHNSON,** *Teachers College, Columbia University*

These lectures by authorities in the various fields show how the assurance of enduring peace can be aided by new approaches to culture, philosophy, religion, jurisprudence, administration, education and relief. Among the contributors are Margaret Mead, Irwin Edman, Father LaFarge, Monsignor Ryan, Chester I. Barnard, etc. $2.00

CIVILIZATION AND GROUP RELATIONSHIPS

Edited by **R. M. MACIVER,** *Professor of Sociology, Columbia University*

This book analyzes types of group relationships in modern society — cultural, educational, economic, industrial and religious — and the problems connected with them. Among the contributors are Eduard C. Lindeman, I. L. Kandel, Robert A. Lynd, Mark Starr, Bishop Tucker, Father LaFarge, etc. $2.00

Language and Myth

By **ERNST CASSIRER**
Late Visiting Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University
Translated by **SUSANNE K. LANGER,** *Author of "Philosophy in a New Key"*

Here is a second volume in English of this eminent philosopher's writings. Written prior to his "An Essay on Man," recently published in English, it documents for the students of this great European thinker the relation of the origin of language and myth to the development of religious ideas and the beginning of conceptual thinking. $2.00

{Coming in January}

Philosophy in American Education

Its Tasks and Opportunities

By **BRAND BLANSHARD,** *Swarthmore College,* **CURT J. DUCASSE,** *Brown University,* **CHARLES W. HENDEL,** *Yale University,* **ARTHUR E. MURPHY,** *University of Illinois,* **MAX C. OTTO,** *University of Wisconsin*

Everyone anxious to see the teachings of philosophy restored to a place of rightful importance in the college curriculum will find this an indispensable volume. It constitutes the report of a Commission on the Function of Philosophy in Liberal Education, organized by the American Philosophical Association to study the status and potentialities of philosophical instruction in this country. $3.00

Ourselves, Inc.

The Story of Consumer Free Enterprise

By **LEO W. WARD**

This vivid, personalized story of consumer cooperatives explains clearly the relation of the cooperative movement to the democratic and spiritual forces of our country. "So convinced that it is convincing, the book is as lively as the subject." — *New York Herald Tribune.* $2.50

The Art of Plain Talk

By **RUDOLPH FLESCH. Author of** *"Marks of a Readable Style"*

All who advocate simplicity and lucidity in written material will welcome this book. It is a plea for plain talk, a description of what plain talk means, and a guide to simplifying one's style of writing which will appeal to all professional writers. $2.50

{Coming in January}

At all bookstores or from

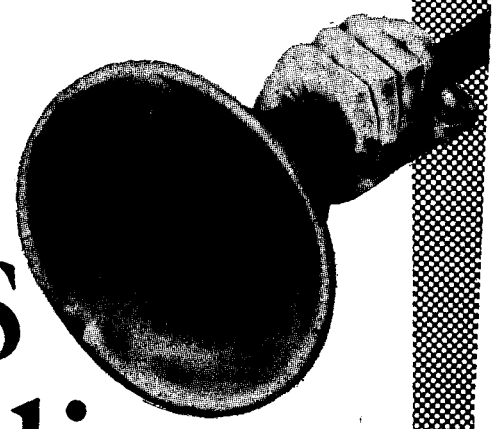
HARPER & BROTHERS • 49 East 33rd Street, N. Y. 16

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACK IN STOCK AGAIN

The thrilling tale of an unknown revolution in American history

Tin Horns & Calico



THE STORY OF NEW YORK'S TIN HORN REBELLION OF 100 YEARS AGO

By HENRY CHRISTMAN

MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE: "Here is the first-rate chronicle of the emergence of democracy within a democracy, a lesson in perspective for radicals, conservatives and in-betweens in the contemporary political forum . . . This is a book that makes history become exciting and alive, with a purpose. It would be difficult to recommend it too highly."

CINCINNATI ENQUIRER: "With skirmishes and pursuits against the background of the wild Catskills, drunken sheriffs' posses, romance, martyrdom and a trial scene unique in American history, there is material here for at least three super-colossal Hollywood productions. And it's all true."

ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT: "The intrigue of plot and counter-plot makes this documented history as thrilling as any novel."

LOUIS ADAMIC: "TIN HORNS & CALICO tells a deeply significant American story which ought to be made part of the American consciousness."

With an introduction by CARL CARMER,
377 pages, $3.75

HENRY HOLT & COMPANY
257 FOURTH AVE., NEW YORK 10

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AN OPEN LETTER TO MYSTERY NOVEL FIENDS

[EXPLAINING THE ORIGIN OF THE MYSTERY BOOK CLUB]

Dear Friend Mystery Novel Fan:

I used to be in the same boat with you — just couldn't beg, borrow, or steal enough worth-while mystery stories to make life complete. Night after night I would read myself to sleep with historical romances, or similar tripe, or with mystery novels that didn't deserve the name. Only every now and then did a really first-rate mystery story turn up, and then it was a day for rejoicing.

It wasn't a question of money. I used to spend plenty of my leisure-time reading, hoping against hope that the next so-called thriller would be worth its cost, and the time taken to struggle through it. My experience was probably the same as yours. Only one out of three or four was a first-rate job; the rest were a waste, and worse.

But books are my business. I *know* there are enough good mystery novels published during a year to provide all the top-notch reading anyone could want. How to find the good ones? You can't tell by the title, or even the author. What I needed was a *reading staff* — a group of people who would read all the mystery books and pick out the best.

Good idea, hey? But a little expensive, what?

Well, in a nutshell, that's how the Unicorn Mystery Book Club was born . . . I got together my business organization; we surveyed the field; we figured out the costs.

The upshot of our analysis was that we decided we could give the public a FOUR-FOR-ONE-VALUE — four of the finest mystery novels obtainable each month, bound in one big, handsome volume, fit for a permanent place in anyone's library — a minimum EIGHT DOLLARS' WORTH OF MYSTERY NOVELS FOR ONLY TWO DOLLARS!

That's how it began. Each month our own private staff of experts sits down and reads stacks of two-to-three-dollar mystery novels submitted by publishers. Each month they select the best four. Each month those four books are printed from the original plates, complete and unabridged, cloth bound in one big 900-page volume, and laid down at the door of our members. And five days later each member sends us only $2.00 plus 15c for our mailing costs.

Just read the panel at the right, describing our selections for this month. Good authors and good titles, aren't they? Good write-ups also. But you and I have been fooled before. This time, however, we have a certain amount of guarantee. These four were selected from whole stacks of new novels. *We know they are the pick of the lot.*

And we have one other guarantee. We can't buy those books anywhere else today for less than $8.00. Unicorn Mystery Book Club members get them for only $2.00! Not bad, eh? You'll think so even more so when you get through reading them.

. . . Here's your chance to join up. As we are presently limiting membership to only 10,000 volumes a month — a mere drop in the bucket compared to the potential demand — we urge you — don't hesitate or you may find yourself on a long waiting list. But if you act quickly you can get in now. That's straight, and don't say we didn't warn you.

One thing more. This book club is different from all the others in that you don't bind yourself to buy any specific number of books. You can resign *at any time.* Say you don't like the first book, or the second, or the tenth. Say that tomorrow, or next week, or next year you start getting sick of reading mysteries. All you have to do is send in your resignation, and that finishes it.

Everything clear? Here's a coupon, at right, to make things easy. Sign up now and get that staff of mystery experts working for YOU.

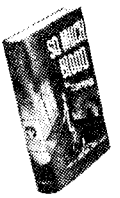
Copyright, 1945, Unicorn Mystery Book Club

Very cordially,

Joseph L Morse

President
Unicorn Mystery Book Club

SO MUCH BLOOD • *by Zelda Popkin*



A slumped body in the studio. And the blood! We guarantee this top-notcher by a famous author will chill and thrill you with its atmosphere, characterization, humor, and genuine originality of plot. $2.00 at bookstores. "Brilliant." — *Chicago Daily News.* "A thrill-a-minute chronicle." — *Hartford Courant.* "Real honey of a climax." — *N. Y. Journal American.* "Quite the goriest book of the season and one of the trickiest and most entertaining." — *San Francisco Chronicle.*

WALL OF EYES • *by Margaret Millar*

The fascinating Detective-Inspector Sands again in a yarn which ranges from the world of the wealthy, decadent Heath family to the underworld of Toronto. $2.00 at bookstores. "Will satisfy the most hypercritical of you blood-and-shudder fans." — *Philadelphia Bulletin.* "The very cream of the year, it has everything." — *San Francisco Chronicle.* "The most intriguing detective we ever met . . . We would give a money-back guarantee on *Wall Of Eyes.*" — *Tulsa Daily World.* "Highly recommended." — *New Yorker.*

NINE STRINGS TO YOUR BOW
By Maurice Walsh

This was so different a story — so hugely entertaining, so exciting to everyone who read it, that we grabbed it off months before it was published. It will arrive at bookstores only a few weeks before this advertisement appears. The critics had not received the book nor reviewed it at the date of writing this announcement, but we can anticipate their enthusiasm. The Saturday Evening Post also quickly grabbed it for serialization, for which we cannot blame them. $2.00 at bookstores.

ACCIDENT, MANSLAUGHTER OR MURDER
By Lee Thayer

A tiny village in Maine provides a strange tale of anger, malice, love and death, sport and tragedy. $2.00 at bookstores. "Confusing clews . . . diverting puzzle." — *Chicago Tribune.* "Diverting, ingenious yarn." — *Hartford Courant.* "Well-tailored job . . . startling conclusion." — *Sacramento Bee.*

JOSEPH L. MORSE, *President*
UNICORN MYSTERY BOOK CLUB
80 Willoughby Street, Brooklyn 1, New York

I want to sign up as a member of the Unicorn Mystery Book Club, starting this month.

Each month send me the club's monthly volume containing four mystery novels (currently selling at no less than $2.00 apiece in bookstores, or at least $8.00 in all), complete and unabridged, and I will then remit just $2.00 plus 15c mailing cost.

Our agreement is that I can resign from the club *at any time.*

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY, ZONE, STATE .....

☐ *Check here if you wish the DeLuxe Edition at 50c extra per volume. DeLuxe Edition is bound in fine, linen-weave cloth, stamped in genuine gold and two colors, with tinted page tops, and decorative endpapers — designed to make a richly bound, uniform set.*

433

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"a mixture of sagacity and entertainment." [1]

"an important contribution to American education." [2]

TEACHER IN AMERICA

by

Jacques Barzun

"It is not only the best of all the current books on the subject of 'education' but it is by all odds the best book on teaching I have ever read. . . . It is humorous, human, intelligent and entirely civilized." — *Lewis Webster Jones, President, Bennington College.*

"Professor Barzun has given us a provocative account of what we are doing. He is not flattering, but also he is not discouraging. The book is human and helpful." — *John Erskine.*

". . . one of the few volumes on education by which no intelligent reader can be bored. As the notices in country newspapers used to say, educationists and even educators, 'who will communicate with' Mr. Barzun, 'will learn something to their advantage.' All they need do is to read his book."—*Christian Gauss,* New York Herald Tribune Book Review.

At all bookstores • $3.00

[1] New Yorker.
[2] Julius E. Warren, Massachusetts Commissioner of Education.

AN ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS BOOK

LITTLE, BROWN BOSTON

BOLLINGEN SERIES

New Titles:

IV

Max Raphael

PREHISTORIC CAVE PAINTINGS

A detailed analysis of Mankind's earliest art, beautifully and lavishly illustrated with 48 collotype plates. Limited edition $7.50

V

Paul Radin

THE ROAD OF LIFE AND DEATH

The ritual drama of the Winnebago Indians of Wisconsin, recorded and interpreted by the noted anthropologist. $4.50

Previously Published:

I

WHERE THE TWO CAME TO THEIR FATHER

A Navaho War Ceremonial recorded by Maud Oakes. A collector's item. With 18 full color plates. $8.50

II

THE TIMAEUS AND CRITIAS OF PLATO

Translated by Thomas Taylor
Introduction by R. Catesby Taliaferro
$2.75

III

Denis de Rougemont

THE DEVIL'S SHARE

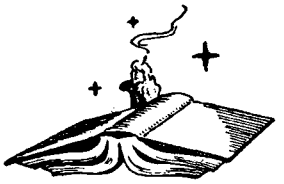
Translated by Haakon Chevalier
Second Edition $2.50

PANTHEON BOOKS INC.
41 Washington Square, New York 12, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

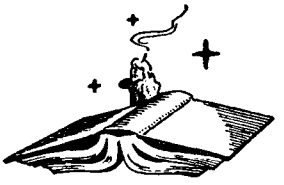
From a letter by Sumner Welles:

"I think it is not too much to say that if thinking Americans will only read this book it may have a very decided effect on public thinking during the coming turbulent years."



From a letter by W. A. Neilson:

"You have let loose a cultural force of enormous promise..."



From a letter by Bernard De Voto:

"I am not writing a blurb but honestly telling you my experience when I say I have had more pleasure from The Practical Cogitator than from any other book I can remember reading in years. It is certainly the most original anthology I have ever seen and certainly one of the best. Whether or not it achieves what you say is its purpose, whether or not it stimulates the reader to go on thinking by himself, I cannot even pretend to say, for its constant effect on me was not to make me stop and think but to read and enjoy. You have succeeded in assembling an amazing variety of fascinating stuff and in making it relevant. I can't say that I know exactly what it is relevant to beyond the enjoyment of expert thinking and good writing, but you have made me believe that it is relevant to something more and that is a kind of small miracle."

The Practical Cogitator

by Charles Curtis, Jr. & Ferris Greenslet

An anthology of man's thinking about man

At all bookstores $3.00 *Houghton Mifflin Company, Publishers*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Aragon

POET OF THE FRENCH RESISTANCE

Edited by Hannah Josephson and Malcolm Cowley

Louis Aragon is today to France a symbol such as Tom Paine was to America during the Revolution. Poet and novelist, he emerged as one of the great leaders of the French underground during the German occupation. Here is the record of what he did during those years, and what he wrote. With articles about Aragon's life and work by Peter Rhodes, Waldo Frank, and Malcolm Cowley, this book includes Aragon's most famous wartime writings. Of the poems, translated by such distinguished English and American poets as Rolfe Humphries, Stephen Spender, John Hayward, Louis MacNiece, George Dillon, Kenneth Muir, and Malcolm Cowley, there is a generous selection — and an impressive one. Here is the best work of a man who emerged, in Mr. Cowley's phrase, as "the poet of the war." $2.00

at all bookstores

DUELL, SLOAN AND PEARCE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

VOLUME 15 · Winter · 1945–46 NUMBER 1

In the right state the scholar is *Man Thinking.*
— Emerson

Editorial Board

Jacques Barzun
R. L. Duffus
Irwin Edman
Christian Gauss
Will D. Howe
Max Lerner
William A. Neilson
Paul Robeson
Harlow Shapley
Donald A. Stauffer
Irita Van Doren
Sumner Welles

Hiram Haydn, *Editor*
Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Consulting Editor*
Celia Lewis, *Assistant Editor*

Advertising Representatives:
Eleanor and William James, 217 Canner Street, New Haven 11, Conn.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OXFORD BOOKS

THE SPIRIT of ENGLISH HISTORY

By A. L. Rowse

A brilliant and lucid portrayal of the influences that shaped England's development — the people, climate, geographical position, and contacts with other countries. *The Spirit of English History* explains England's present and future in terms of her past. $2.00

FEDERALISM and REGIONALISM IN GERMANY

The Division of Prussia

By Arnold Brecht

A high official in the Prussian government before the Hitler regime here discusses in its historical perspective the crucial question of political economic de-centralization of Germany and makes cogent recommendations for the future. *Maps, Appendices.* $2.50

BEETHOVEN

By Sir Donald Tovey

An analysis of Beethoven's music in a style that is lively and human, yet scholarly and profound. The book deals with the materials of Beethoven's language, tonality, rhythm and movement, phrasing and accent. Music examples. $3.00

PAIDEIA

The Ideals of Greek Culture

By Werner Jaeger

Translated from the German by Gilbert Highet

Volume I of Professor Jaeger's comprehensive study of Greek culture has now been revised to conform with Volume II and III in which the notes are an important contribution to the value of the work.

Volume I, $5.00 Volume II, $4.25 Volume III, $3.75
The set, $12.50

At all bookstores

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
114 Fifth Avenue, New York 11

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Winter • 1945–46 *Vol. 15 • No. 1*

CONTENTS

The American Scholar 1932–1946	*Marjorie Hope Nicolson*	11
Old Adam and the Atom	*James Marshall*	13
An Ex-Marine Returns to Teaching	*Donald A. Stauffer*	25
Elegy, *A Poem*	*Irene Orgel*	34
What We Hope from Thomas Mann	*Albert Guérard*	35
Mackinder's Heartland	*Hans W. Weigert*	43
A Reading of Keats (I)	*Allen Tate*	55
Saturday in the Country, *A Poem*	*Marie Gilchrist*	64
A Day of War	*Howard Fast*	65
The Premature Death of Thomas Carlyle (1795–1945)	*Eric Russell Bentley*	69
Biography, *A Poem*	*Don Gordon*	77
Henry Adams and the Critics	*Max I. Baym*	79
Renan on War and Peace	*Aristide Mian*	90

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM

The Future of Religion

The Need for Religion and Its Truth	*Raphael Demos*	97
Vertical and Horizontal Thinking	*Paul Tillich*	102
The Autonomy of Democratic Faith	*Sidney Hook*	105
UNDER WHATEVER SKY	*Irwin Edman*	114

THE REVOLVING BOOKSTAND

Art and the Prejudicial Tendency	*Douglas Rigby*	117

Office of Publication: Rumford Press, Concord, N. H. *Editorial and Executive Offices:* Phi Beta Kappa, 5 East 44th Street, New York 17, N. Y. *Subscription rates:* domestic — one year $2.50, two years $4.50, three years $6.00; foreign and Canadian — 50 cents a year additional for postage. Published four times a year since 1932 — December, March, June, and September. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Concord, N. H., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1945, by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa. Printed in the U. S. A. Manuscripts accompanied by addressed and stamped envelopes will be returned if publication is infeasible, but no responsibility is assumed for their loss or injury, or for the views expressed in articles published.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY

The Friendly Persuasion

JESSAMYN WEST

has filled her book with all the color of the Indiana countryside, with homely wisdom, with a love for people, and a gaiety and wit that flavor each chapter. THE FRIENDLY PERSUASION marks the beginning of an important literary career. It is the kind of a book that will endure as a beloved classic.

$2.50

All Trivia

by LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

Here are the "tremendous trifles," as Don Marquis called them, emended and revised by the author.

$2.50

Trial Balance

WILLIAM MARCH

has selected 55 of his stories covering the years from 1928 to 1944. Many have never before appeared in book form, and several new stories are published here for the first time. *$3.50*

A vital sociological survey — in the tradition of Middletown

BLACK METROPOLIS

A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City

by St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton

RICHARD WRIGHT, in his introductory essay to BLACK METROPOLIS, calls it "a landmark of research and scientific achievement." A vital, timely document, its reading is essential to the understanding of America's Number One problem.

"This is an authoritative, carefully documented analysis of the socio-economic status of the Negro in Chicago. The book is forthrightly written. It does not substitute opinion for fact. It evaluates prejudice. This is a *must* book for all socially-minded citizens." — WILTON KROGMAN, Associate Professor of Anatomy and Physical Anthropology, University of Chicago.

Charts and diagrams, comprehensive index, 809 pages. *$5.00*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 15 *Winter 1945-46* NUMBER 1

The Editorial Board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *takes great pleasure in announcing the election to its membership of Jacques Barzun and Donald A. Stauffer.*

The American Scholar 1932-1946

IN A recent article in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, Joseph A. Brandt issued a challenge to the American scholar. "If the peace of the future fails," he said, "it will be in no small measure because the scholar was unequal to the task." In its present state, he believes, "American scholarship is hopelessly inadequate to give the people intellectual and spiritual leadership. . . . Consciously or unconsciously the American scholar has lived aloof from the people."

Drastic as is Mr. Brandt's critique, it pales before Francis Bacon's, uttered more than three centuries ago in *The Advancement of Learning*. Standing at the portals of the modern world, Bacon anticipated that the "advancement" of such "learning" as he had in mind would meet with sharp opposition. The "divines" would oppose it; so would the "politiques." Yet the threat from these groups would be far less ominous than the danger to learning of the "professors." The greatest of all foes to the true advancement of learning, Bacon declared, are "the learned men themselves." Bacon's passages should be required reading for all "professors" at the opening of each academic year. His is a wider survey of the "diseases" and "peccant humours" than is Mr. Brandt's, yet in his climactic passage he makes the same general point, couched in the rhetoric of which he was a master. Men have entered into the profession of learning

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with many motives, he says in effect, "but seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason to *the benefit and use of man*."

With this issue THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR enters upon the fifteenth year of its existence. From modest beginnings it has gone on, we believe, from strength to strength until it has become a recognized and important national periodical. It was founded and it has been and is edited by a group of men and women, including "professors" of learning in the arts and sciences, "writers," "journalists," "artists," "politiques" — all sharing the belief that the findings of learning can and must be made intelligible to thoughtful general readers.

We believe with Bacon three hundred years ago and with Mr. Brandt yesterday, that the "American scholar" owes a duty to the world, that the "people" have a right to look to the "scholar" for that wisdom without which the people perish, that from the "scholar" the "people" should — as too often they do not — learn "wisdom, charity, tolerance." Mr. Brandt has flung down the gauntlet before the "American scholar." THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR picks it up. Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war — and peace has her problems no less ominous than those of war. As we start out upon our fifteenth year, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR pledges itself, as in the past, to remember its obligation to scholarship and its duty to "the people." Even more than in the past, we will strive for the humanization of knowledge, constantly aware that scholarship is not "a couch, whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; . . . or a tower of state, for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort, for strife and contention." Learning and scholarship should and must be "a rich storehouse, for the glory of the Creator, and *the relief of man's estate*."

Marjorie Hope Nicolson

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Old Adam and the Atom

James Marshall

SOMETHING much greater than Hiroshima was smashed when the atomic bomb was dropped there on August 6, 1945. Something much more pernicious than the women and children and homes and autocrat-corrupted mankind of Hiroshima received a body blow that day. The old ship of state sprang a leak. The fiction of sovereignty had its false crown and robes blown right off it. Sovereignty was revealed in all its nakedness as being nothing absolute, nothing final, nothing complete, nothing all-powerful, nothing divine.

Now let me make it clear that there are two things to which I do not refer by this, though they may also be true. This is not intended as a comment on the very human quality and person of Emperor Hirohito, the alleged descendant of a sun goddess. Nor is it intended to refer to the fact that American isolation must from here on be deemed a lost childhood of the American people. Even though a sense of moral propriety and commercial self-interest had failed to do so, our own superbombers of great cruising capacity and the German rocket bomb experiments had effectively outmoded isolation for us, the British and the Soviets.

What the atomic bomb shattered was the traditional concept that nations were absolutely sovereign over a given territory; that as sovereigns they had full control within their borders, inalienable rights to make war beyond those borders, and the power and privilege to tell others, in the name of sovereignty, to stay at home and mind their own business.

The heart of the whole matter is that although we cannot

© JAMES MARSHALL, lawyer and member of the New York Board of Education, is the author of *Swords and Symbols: The Technique of Sovereignty*, a book describing the unrealistic character of traditional concepts of sovereignty.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prevent any nation from dropping an atom-smashing bomb on New York, Washington, Chicago, Dallas or points west by proclaiming our sovereignty over those communities, we can refuse to permit such international control of the manufacture of destructive weapons within our borders as would prevent destruction. This we claim to be a national right. We can say that no international authority can deprive us of the power to make atomic bombs or other destructive weapons *unless* it first pulverizes our cities and kills or maims the inhabitants thereof. And other nations can do the same. This irrational obstinacy is called the assertion of sovereignty. In other words, nations to date have been willing to make of the false title of sovereign a *nom de guerre*.

There is, however, nothing sacred, mysterious or profound about sovereignty; nor is there anything absolute about the powers of a government or the group within a nation that exercises sovereign powers through a government. Sovereignty is in essence nothing more than power, power expressed either through physical force or through economic pressures or by psychological methods. It must be apparent that the strength and effectiveness of these expressions, or weapons, of sovereignty fluctuate and that though the state or sovereign may have a preponderance of physical force, economic control or instruments for propaganda or education, it cannot have a monopoly on any or all of these expressions of power for any substantial period of time.

You may wonder what all this has to do with international affairs. Isn't a nation at least the absolute sovereign over its territory? Dissatisfied groups can attack or challenge our federal, state and local governments, even oust those in power; but could Germany or Japan interfere with the United States? They could and did. Before the first World War the German Reich planted in the United States saboteurs who placed bombs on bridges and in ships. For a number of years the Nazi regime had its fifth columns in many countries. Both the Nazis and the Japanese carried on campaigns of propaganda; that is, they used psychological weapons to strengthen their case with the people as against that of the governments of the lands in which they operated.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When they made war Germany and Japan further interfered with the sovereignty of the United States — and of every other nation in the world — for they set the areas in which all governments had to devote their primary interests. Those matters to which the governments of the United States, Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union and China desired to give attention had to be put aside or harnessed to the national effort to defeat the Wehrmacht and the Japanese armed forces. No one is absolute sovereign, surely, when any foreign piper can call the tune. And who was sovereign of the occupied countries during the period of occupation — the Greek people and their government, or the Nazis and their Gestapo? The Koreans or the Japanese armies?

But surely in times of peace a nation is absolute sovereign over its territories; it cannot have its sovereignty limited from the outside, you may say. When nations without aggressive intentions must spend thought and means and manpower on maintaining readiness to defend themselves, can they be said to be free agents, do they have absolute sovereignty over their soil? Or are they sovereigns only to the degree that they can keep their soil free of invaders and their energies directed towards matters of internal concern to their people?

During the years that the great powers had extraterritorial rights in China, there was a limit to Chinese sovereignty. When the United States was maintaining or throwing out governments in Latin America there was a limit to the sovereignty of the Latin American states. If certain Balkan countries feel it necessary to obtain Soviet approval of their acts, how absolute is their sovereignty? How absolute was it while the imperialist governments of France and Great Britain were dictating policy in the Balkan countries in the interests of foreign investors?

How free in its sovereignty is Great Britain today with the continent of Europe a great potential airbase for robot bombs and rockets? How complete is the sovereignty of any nation in the face of atomic power? It might be difficult to conceive of a small nation winning a war against a great power even now; but is it too much to imagine Ecuador or Liberia or Thailand develop-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing scientists and atomic weapons in the depths of their jungles in the next twenty years and forcing some concession from a great sovereign state?

These are the facts of life. These are the realities — not the abstractions of political philosophers, the diplomatic legalisms of foreign offices, and the proud and orgiastic patriotism of senators and other political speakers who assert national sovereignty to be absolute, supreme and sacred. This traditional concept of sovereignty is just plain verbalism. It was a theory first announced to justify and strengthen the claims of absolute monarchs: the Valois in France, the Stuarts in Britain.

Even when the more democratic governments prevailed, the theory of absolute sovereignty continued to be asserted. But in practice rich man, poor man, beggar man and thief, and especially doctor, lawyer and merchant chief denied legitimacy to such sovereignty. It never had any factual justification. It has always been fallacious and its fallacies would be the death of civilization if continued today.

Whatever semblance of truth there might have been to the contention that nations had absolute sovereignty over their territories, rather than a limited, fluctuating power, was once and for all cleared up at Hiroshima. The classical idea is now a sovereign in exile.

In all fairness it should be said that the irrational obstinacy above mentioned, this assertion of sovereignty, is more than a stubborn assertion of a false doctrine. The false doctrine is after all a rationalization, a justification of an existing practice, the practice of national self-preservation. No people will willingly permit itself to be overrun or willingly let those things it deems precious be destroyed.

Nevertheless there are cultural situations in which men do not feel a need to go about armed, and there have been others in which they have felt it necessary to be continually armed. Thus in most American communities it is a crime for the ordinary citizen to go about carrying a gun. In frontier days it was deemed folly not to do so. There have been civilizations which did not feel it a necessity to have their borders fortified and guarded

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

against their neighbors, and others in which weapons had to be constantly ready for defense.

It is not for a moment suggested that men should abandon action for self-preservation. That would mean passive or active suicide, self-destruction. It would be expecting the race of man to forego an impulse which, if not instinctive, is certainly a quickly acquired and fundamental characteristic. It is manifested in early infancy, and it is the source of a great deal of man's creative effort. Self-preservation has been the motivating force for much of civilization, from the raising of foods to the control of floods. But the amount of aggression infused in the brew of self-preservation is another matter. This depends on many things and is not stationary. The peaceful arable life of the Indians of the plains was changed to a warlike existence when the horse was introduced into their civilization. With the horse they could hunt buffalo, and that required traversing territory which was used or claimed by other tribes, over which other tribes claimed sovereignty. That meant fighting.

Where a situation exists in which men have faith in one another's intentions, they do not feel it necessary to preserve themselves through aggression, or deny themselves the benefits of sharing with others. It has been suggested that there has been no greater change in the last two hundred years in American life than our comparative freedom today from highwaymen and burglars. In colonial days men put heavy bars across their doors. Today we use small locks or even leave our doors unlocked. We have greater faith in our neighbors. The same aggressive elements in self-preservation are no longer necessary.

Nor do men in community life generally rely on themselves alone for their self-preservation. They place reliance on the action of the community, the government, the laws and their enforcement. But even these would be insufficient, the government and the enforcement of the laws would not be enough upon which to rely, were not the climate of opinion in the community such as to support the efforts of government and favor the enforcement of the laws. And the more the climate of opinion is non-aggressive — that is, the more it accepts mutual responsibility for the safety

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and security of all — the less reliance need be placed on laws and governments.

Let us return to nations and to people who are not willing to permit themselves to be overrun or intentionally to let those things they value be destroyed. Nations and people cannot preserve themselves today by their own independent efforts. They cannot even preserve themselves through federations or unions, unless these include all the world and possess the sanctions (that is, the powers) to prevent any serious independent preparations for aggressive self-preservation.

The bomb of Hiroshima which pulverized the city and seared its inhabitants has also illuminated this point. It is childish of American leaders to suppose that the nature of the atomic bomb can long be kept a secret from other nations; for even if the scientists of other lands, speaking as they do the international language of science, do not speedily repeat the Anglo-American achievement, it is a well-known truth that when five people know a secret it is no longer a secret. And if the American leaders do not believe the secret can be long effective, they are misleading the American people to destruction. For it is already apparent that the have-not nations in the bomb fission field are frightened of our power and will intensify their efforts to discover as great a destructive threat as we possess.

Out of such terror aggression surely develops. Secrecy and self-preservation by individual nations or alliances must inevitably cause a reaction of counter-secrecy and counter-alliances. Thus the Triple Alliance brought its Triple Entente; the half a League of Nations brought its Axis. Even now there are headlines about an Eastern and a Western bloc. The last Blitzkrieg came close to succeeding. The new alliances for self-defense will fear a more furious atomic Blitzkrieg. Which alliance, nervously fingering the trigger, will shoot first, will set off the first rocket bearing an atomic bomb? In self-preservation they will destroy their own civilization — possibly the world.

Then there are those who say that we should forswear the use of atomic energy in war. But how many solemn engagements have not the nations broken in the conduct of war? And if you

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were a Russian or a Frenchman or an Argentinian or a Chinese would you trust such a promise? Would you feel secure in the belief that a nation which without warning used a weapon more terrible than gas or liquid fire or robot bombs — a weapon which in a momentary flash wiped out a city and half its inhabitants — was civilized and trustworthy? Just suppose for a moment that the shoe were on the other foot.

No, the old Adam is not to be trusted with the old atom — not until he grows up to be a Micah or a Jesus or a Buddha. In other words, until we have reconverted our swords and spears to the industries of peace, have devoted our aggressive impulses to the service of our constructive impulses, we will not trust each other with secret weapons and self-starting destructive power. We dare not trust each other to play with the fiction of sovereignty. We send men to asylums for playing at Caesar or Nero or Napoleon.

Mankind has a devilish capacity to invent abstractions and rationalizations, as well as the ingenuity to create mechanisms for its own destruction. Through our capacity to abstract and to rationalize we can be cruel without a feeling of sympathy for our victims or guilt for our acts. We can by these means explain away all guilt and justify our callousness.

But the power to create abstractions also implies the power to use our reason, to look facts in the eye and stand up to them as men. If that be so then let us reason about the work at San Francisco, and let us put aside the sensibilities of states concerning their sovereignty. Let us recall August 6, 1945, and, in the light of Hiroshima, recast the United Nations charter in terms of sovereignties that are not immune but in truth must be ever ready to duck rockets and expire from atomic fission. Let us accept the fact that since that day in August the charter is outdated, that it has grown whiskers. For the right of national privacy has become obsolete.

It has been said that there has been a lag of a century between social, economic and political institutions and the combustion engine; and that there has been a lag of more centuries between those institutions and electronics. Our very thinking in those fields has not kept stride with such technological developments.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If this be so, how many more centuries is the use of atomic energy ahead of our institutions and our thinking? It is not only ahead of our institutions and thinking in its negative, destructive possibilities but also in its positive, creative ones.

The use of atomic energy in industry and transportation may not be immediate, but who can doubt that it is far off? What will this do to present plants and equipment, to present modes of employment? How will this dislocate our economic system?

But this technological change around the corner poses an even more basic question. Will every householder and every factory, every car owner and every transportation concern be as free to handle this new power source as he is his coal pile or his gas tank? Or will the organization of society and the social habits of all people have to undergo reorientation?

Of course the atoms that will be used in cars will not be the same, will not be as dramatically lethal as those used at Hiroshima. Nevertheless they will afford a form of energy far greater than anything that can now be pocketed to light a fire or kill a man.

If new forms of energy, new technological methods require an adjustment of our social thinking and institutions to adjust them to the new facts and relationships in domestic matters, how much more pressing today is the need to bring our international thinking and institutions into realistic relationship to the new energy and technology? Just because it is hard work or involves the confession that we are not prophets is no reason in such a critical situation not to readjust even recently devised institutions to the new atomic era. The world did not know at San Francisco what was about to occur at Hiroshima.

What ought we to do? First let the San Francisco gathering be reconvened. Then let the new conference strike out the veto power of the great nations and give authority to the United Nations to make rules governing the production of devices for releasing atomic energy and rockets, and to inspect all places in which it is thought at any time that such instruments may be in the process of manufacture. Finally, let the Conference authorize the press to enter every part of the world and report on what

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it may find relative to atomic energy and the manufacture of instruments of destruction.

There is no sovereign right to a race to hell. There is no power other than that of inspection and publicity that can forewarn and forearm and to that extent disarm. We can no longer accept the right of any power to veto the imperative need of the world to know what the nations are producing and preparing by way of atom bombs and rockets — and for that matter any production relative to the use of atomic energy. We require the power of official investigation and the unofficial reporting of the press. For in many ways the latter can be more effective, being less subject to diplomatic niceties and reticences or bureaucratic lethargy and possible corruption.

We have not yet developed beyond a cruel, rationalizing race, ever ready to give a reason for risking our own suicide in our effort to destroy others. The United Nations charter has not yet released the situations of aggressive tensions which have produced modern wars. Irredentism and imperialism still reveal their fangs. Nations, races and peoples still spray the world with hatred of each other.

For examples of the first point of critical tension, irredentism, we need only to look at the shores of the Adriatic, the Dodecanese Islands, Palestine and Macedonia. To find examples of imperialism rampant we may read the reports of the proceedings of the Council of Ministers talking in the language of the new charter of the United Nations about "trusteeships" by individual nations.

For it is solemn nonsense to speak of such trusteeships by individual powers as though they were in substance something different from mandates under the League of Nations; or to believe mandates to be in essence different from spheres of influence. It is scarcely progress to call imperialism by a new name — and a recalled charter conference should address itself to these facts.

Perhaps there could be no better example of that lag in thinking and relationships already referred to than these trusteeships over which the Council of Ministers has been fretting. It made

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some sense, even after World War I, to set up buffer states and fortify islands, harbors, peninsulas and foreign ports as bastions of defense. But not today. There is no defense adequate to protect cities, farms or bastions against long-range aircraft and rockets bearing atom-smashing bombs — and none is in the offing. Anyone who says so is whistling in the dark. Consequently, the sooner the world faces this fact, the greater the chance of race survival. Advance bastions of defense are now advanced areas for offense, and if they remain under the control of individual nations, can only serve as points of irritation, as focal points of those infections of fear which underlie so much international aggression. We may blandly say that Russia and China have nothing to fear from our possession of Okinawa; but we are not equally certain about Russia's occupation of the Kuriles which lie at her own back door.

Nothing illuminates the explosive nature of imperialism better than public opinion on the subject. Public opinion here condemns the greediness of Great Britain and the malevolent intentions of the Soviets. In England it blames us and the Russians. In Moscow it condemns us and the British. In fact we are probably all rogues in these matters of empire, and there is no need for any of us to be sanctimonious on the subject.

Or take the matter of imperialism one step further. We feel we do not need advice or interference as to Latin American affairs or the control of Japan; Great Britain feels she requires no advice or interference as regards India and Greece; the Soviets want to be free of advice or interference in Poland and the Balkans. Who is virtuous now?

The third unreleased situation of aggressive tension is that of race relations and cultural relations. We Americans know from our own Negro problem how deep-seated is the former; the history of Latin-American relations offers an index of the difficulties in bettering the latter.

These difficulties, these points of tension, are not relieved by cultural imperialism. The patterns of the British Council, the Comintern, the American Division of Cultural Affairs and the French cultural adventures tend to make for competition in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ideological and the intellectual field — as did Nazi foreign propaganda. If business follows the flag, cultural monkey business attempts to precede it. For all its pretty names and virtuous protestations, cultural exportation has for the most part been imperialist and a form of psychological warfare.

What we require for the peace of the world is not the exportation of cultures but the joint and conscious creation of an international climate of opinion. Such a climate is not fostered by trying to sell, however smoothly, the virtues of a national culture. That kind of merchandising is not essentially different from selling Sheffield needles or Detroit cars in the foreign market. And when we start to puff our own wares, we inevitably come to depreciating those of other nations — and this hurts and misleads. It has little relevance to inherent values.

Is it not rather by treating of inherent values, by submitting to frank appraisal ideals and rationalizations — and our attempts to realize and use them — that mutual respect and common understanding will be advanced? What we need is a sense of world oneness, that unity which prophets from Zachariah to Wendell Willkie have preached, if atomic energy is to be handled as a world problem. Intellectual competition among nations sets up barriers, barriers which cause irritation and conflict, which in their turn outline the trajectories of armed conflicts. This is the antithesis to oneness. It angers and confuses, and in so doing reduces the chance to develop a common international climate of opinion.

Just as we require the fusion of armed might to meet the claims that nations as sovereigns can destroy each other, so also we need cultural cooperative effort to develop a world culture in reply to the threats of international psychological warfare. The proposed Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the United Nations is a hopeful move in this direction. The question is whether this organization, like the United Nations Organization, can act promptly and vigorously enough so that our social thinking can cut the lead of scientific and technological development — before the race is run.

Can we overcome the handicap of our rationalizations and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

redirect our competitive and destructive energies before the bell at the finish is set off by atomic fission? Have we the courage, before the clouds close in upon us, to reconvene the San Francisco Conference and open up the world to one another's view? Have we the sense, without pride in our own self-righteousness and without indulging in the pompous fantasies of sovereignty, to agree that there shall be no secret closets in the world?

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . . I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed." Now then, which shall it be?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An Ex-Marine Returns to Teaching

Donald A. Stauffer

THE American attitude toward education is paradoxical. We overvalue its possibilities and underpay its teachers. We expect it to perform miracles, yet would be thoroughly alarmed if it did. Parents make brave sacrifices to send their children to college, and then are annoyed or puzzled if college changes the kids into young adults. We have been fighting a war. With our usual optimism and our belief that any change is always a step forward, we are most of us making two guesses about the future: The war will have changed education, and education will at last turn out products capable of making a better world.

There are at least a couple of grains of sand in the gearbox, however: the veteran returning to get or complete his education, and the postwar programs themselves. An article in *The Saturday Evening Post*, later reprinted in the *Reader's Digest*, attracted considerable attention not long ago. It recounted the disappointments of an ex-Marine upon returning to high school. As another ex-Marine and a returning teacher, I would like to consider some of the questions and problems which, talking to soldiers in the Pacific islands, I could see some time ago were bound to turn up. For although Peleliu in the Palaus may seem far removed from Public School Number 31 and Pelham High and Purdue, it is actually not such a distant world as the feature writers and some soldiers would have civilians believe. At any rate, Texas and Massachusetts take the States with them wherever they go, and

©DONALD A. STAUFFER, professor of English at Princeton University, was overseas for fourteen months, serving as a Major in the Air Combat Intelligence of the United States Marine Corps. Professor Stauffer's poem, "An Essay on Lassitude," was published in the Autumn 1945 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bring back Uncle Sugar in their duffel bags, with a few foreign souvenirs added, when they return.

For one thing, the returning veteran will want to be treated as a grown-up. This is all to the good. One of the best methods will be to increase his assignments, for any soldier who is serious enough to take up the job of completing his education is perfectly capable of shouldering plenty of work. And perhaps such examples will encourage the younger students, who have never seen the Rhine or the Salween, to put more into their own schoolwork.

Although the veteran may be old in the wars, he is not old in learning or he would not be back in school. It is his responsibility to get back into harness. He must get all he can from these civilian classrooms, adapting himself to them rather than judging them by his own late standards of ordnance training, naval etiquette, or the school of hard socks. And this will come hard for him. It came hard for the narrator in the article mentioned above, who seemed particularly irked by being offered, after Guadalcanal, that gay little American poem with the refrain

Bobolink, bobolink,
Spink, spank, spink!

The poem does seem somehow out of place and drowned in a high-school curriculum, although I cannot believe that the course was built around it or that it was of crucial importance. Nevertheless, it serves as a fair example of the problem: What will the ex-Marine do with the birdies and the bobolinks? The ex-Wave with domestic science? The ex-Navy-gunner with beginning calculus? And the ex-sergeant with elementary psychology or civics?

Lump them and like them, I would say. I maintain that the Marine, enraged by the spink spank spink of the bobolink, was taking his wartime experience too seriously. Relax, brother! I have seen another Marine on Bougainville with a butterfly net, and nobody kidded the pants off him. And there was an excellent horticulturist in the Seabees who wrote his dad regularly about the great open-air greenhouse that is the South Pacific. There is a difference between taking education seriously and taking it grimly.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Perhaps the answer here is for teachers, as well as students, to keep their eye unswervingly on the ball, which for them is the subject under study. Shelley's skylark and Keats's nightingale could doubtless be presented persuasively as more grown-up birds than the bobolink, but even his spink spank spink should not be throttled just because masses of men have killed each other. In battle, no birds sing, if they know what's good for them. But although many of our returning young men will insist upon doing something similar, it is as ridiculous to judge by close-at-hand war experiences the jaunty bobolink that sings his peace-time way through grade schools and some high schools as, conversely, it would be to demand that life in a forward-area foxhole should conform to the cheery chortlings of the bobolink.

How to put salt on the tail of the bobolink I want to take up later, but here is the place to extend a caution to civilian teachers: no one will benefit if veterans are treated with special consideration. Such tact would make most of them uncomfortable and the rest intolerable. Our natural tendency toward showing off should be curbed; the penchant for thinking "Nobody knows de troubles I've seen" ought to be sidetracked. War correspondents have done the public no service by repeatedly exaggerating the gulf between civilians and soldiers, as if the military were a race apart. The better men among the relatively few who have seen danger and tragedy will not wish to emphasize their insight, while the greater part will have experienced nothing more severe than discipline, discomfort, travel, and boredom. The average ex-soldier is just the boy in the house next door who for a time dressed up in wolf's clothing. To encourage self-dramatization in any form is simply to take your eye off the ball, to look back instead of concentrating on the present for the sake of a good future flight.

But the greatest problem with the returning veteran is that he will expect so much so immediately. The habit of war encourages direct action to secure demonstrable physical results. And this habit the soldier will bring back with him. He will know how assembling his M-1 and practicing on the range made him a better rifleman. And he will demand to know what he will learn

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from, or rather, what he will "get out of," a liberal education.

There is a story going the rounds which educators may find hits home increasingly. A distinguished churchman spoke for an hour before an audience on the subject of the Immaculate Conception, with theological subtlety, learning, and brilliance. Afterwards, when he asked for questions, there was a long silence. At length one voice spoke out: "What are the advantages?" Every teacher in America will have to answer such a question concerning his field, many times for many returning soldiers. And the answers will afford most contentment if they are simple and practical, preferably indicating advantages that may be gauged at once by some indisputable objective standard such as dollars or votes. The nature of the liberal arts makes such answers embarrassing. The best and most honest answers are likely to bewilder the questioner or to leave him unsatisfied. It is far easier to point out that So-and-so, his old commanding officer whom he admires, or this aviator, or so many United States Presidents, have been college men, or to dig up statistics (provided they can be found) from *Who's Who* or Dun and Bradstreet.

The ex-serviceman has a terrific sense of urgency. He feels that he must get on with his career. If he gives up part of his life for an education, he intends to have something to show for it. He wants no shilly-shallying, no ambiguous answers, for he is used to orders and action. The pressure, therefore, towards vocational and technical and specialized and practical programs, wrapped up and delivered in the minimum of time, will be enormous. Although the expected sharp increase in technical training schools will gratify this demand in part, the old-style liberal education will be under constant bombardment.

Here, too, the answer is probably to keep the eye on the ball, to realize that although the veteran is demanding an education, he does not thereby demonstrate that he knows what an education is. The colleges and universities must set the standards as they see them. They must strenuously resist the shortcuts and the temporizing programs; the bob-tailed degrees, with courses scanted and skimped, and faculties overworked until exams and lectures are cynically perfunctory; the acceptance of ludicrous

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

makeshifts (accompanied by Dad's check) as entrance requirements; the administrative pressure not to flunk out the incompetent and lazy — all the popular substitutes that will fill the dormitories and the university tills at the expense of sane education and of the trusting, hopeful veterans themselves.

Not a college in the country is unaware of these pitfalls. There is indeed some danger that liberal education, in efforts to forestall its own threatened demise, will talk itself to death. Every college or university has its committees on postwar planning. New curricula and manifestos and statements of programs are already springing up all over the land and will inevitably become so common that grave risk of drugging popular attention looms ahead. The conception of a liberal education, as I have already suggested, is difficult to state convincingly to people who have not been exposed to it themselves, and in terms that do not apply to it. It may not be so hard to describe as for a scientist to explain to a medieval monk the quantum theory, or for that matter, for the medieval monk to convince the scientist of the number and nature of the angels. But it is hard. And if a farmer or shoemaker understands the argument for a liberal education, he already has the cultured, civilized point of view. If on the other hand a scientist or a corporation president is impatient or unsympathetic, he is a barbarian in spite of bank-balance or any number of letters after his name. Furthermore, since the liberal arts are so diverse and complex, including values and opinions as well as facts, and centering on that slippery unpredictable animal Man, any explanation or defense tends to sound vague, general, or elusive. Yet they have many defenders and supporters. And it is the mark of a person interested in liberal studies that he should be perpetually puzzling himself and others as to precisely *what* he is interested in.

A distinguished educator said the other day that he had read so much about "values" that he no longer had any idea what the word meant. The same can probably be said for such terms as "democracy," "the American way," the "dignity of the individual," "spirit," "idealism," "culture," and even "liberal education" itself. But although values cannot be defined in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

same way that one can give the boundaries of Kansas, they nevertheless exist and guide our actions, now as always. Because the values of material comfort and economic power, for instance, have become so increasingly dominant, other aspects of human life have come to be undervalued. And it is the purpose of a liberal education to make a student aware of *all* the intangibles that govern his life as well as human history, so that he may understand them, control them, and profit by them in the same way and to the same sort of valued end that the student in the trade school learns about combustion engines. The climate of our age simply makes it a bit more of a strain to show that a sense of justice or a sense of hatred or a sense of inferiority is as real as a sense of smell or a Wright airplane motor. Judging by the popularity of the remark, the values implicit in Stalin's belittling of the Pope — "How many military divisions does he control?" — are widely appreciated. Fewer people remember that if there were not other values based on less tangible support than Army Corps, there would be no Pope for Stalin to underestimate. The liberal college, therefore, keeps on with its task of affirming the intangibles that persist through history, justifying itself to hostile ears, again giving an explanation, and at last explaining its explanation. As the parrot said while he walked the length of the clothesline, "It may not be funny, but it's darned hard to do."

There is possibly another reason to distrust the familiar fine-sounding words and dignified ample sweeps of these postwar programs — our American tendency to think that saying a thing is the equivalent of doing it. No one was ever educated by a program. When the student has said, "I desperately want an education" and the University has replied, "Here is the best plan our longest thoughts can devise," the race has not yet even started. A good education can result only from effort on the part of the individual student guided by individual teachers and continued for years. The most that any program can do is to set up a helpful framework. And perhaps the only effective over-all program is the selection of eager, intelligent students and of teachers who understand and enjoy their professions.

Since that last sentence sounds like one more of those dangerous,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or at any rate not particularly useful, generalizations, this article might shift in its final third to one teacher's particular slant on his own subject: what he thinks he is accomplishing in teaching English literature, and what effect the war has had on his views.

If I were attempting to sell my line of goods — let us assume to an earnest, bright but uninformed ex-soldier — my argument would run that English literature would help him to live more easily and efficiently. It would do this by showing him things about himself through the imagined experiences of others. It would improve his inner eyesight, so that he could see further, and more clearly, and sometimes even in the dark. He would learn to understand and sympathize with modes of life he has not yet encountered and perhaps may never run up against. But then again, perhaps he may. The practical value of his absorbing literature would be analogous to a boxer skipping rope or an oarsman pulling on a rowing machine: it would develop powers and limber him up for big events to come in his own career.

Furthermore, literature and art would get him out of the solitary confinement of himself. It would take away the fear and hatred that spring from ignorance, and perhaps give him that new sensation of disinterested love that is one way of describing the sense of beauty. It would present all types of people in all their moods and thoughts and activities, so that he might develop judgment and compassion, and at the age of twenty-five, know more than Nestor (which would include, of course, knowing who Nestor was). It would increase his friends and lengthen his life span.

Most important of all, literature would supplement his other studies — not by taking up a *single* aspect of human experience, such as numbers, or economics, or the outside world, or physiology, or formal ethics, or society in the past, but by attempting to recreate complex human life as it is actually lived by individuals. Where else will he get help in learning to see clearly human experience *as a living whole*? Or is he so wise he needs no help in understanding this miracle and mystery?

Then, for fear that I had lost him amid all these maxims, I would go back to the bobolink, to find out whether he had never

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

yet felt any gay Franciscan brotherhood with the birds, or whether he had gone on to other interests simply because he had heard that damned bobolink so often. If the latter were true and if he were still listening, I might try to point out why literature seems to me the most admirable of all instruments for teaching us how to live a good life. In the first place, it doesn't preach directly very often — for that is a *single* way of looking at experience and is rarely as effective as a parable or a story. And in the second place, literature is so complex that in digging out one moral you will frequently turn up two or three others in the process — perhaps conflicting and perhaps even more pleasant and profitable.

Take *Paradise Lost* as an example that soars above the bobolink and perhaps even above the bobolink's friends and detractors. Milton thought he was justifying the ways of God to men; so you read it through to find the justification. You admire it enough to read what Shelley, say, also thinks about the poem, and you learn that he considers it great because of the superb conception of Satan as the defender of liberty. Milton's God, Shelley tells you, is as stupid and cruel as all tyrants. In the search you may read Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* to learn what's wrong with tyrants and to find other examples of unconquered spirits. But you return to *Paradise Lost,* rereading it to find out if it really does give the effect of praising the devil. Or does the character of Lucifer change and deteriorate, and how is that connected with the moral of the poem? How has Milton reconciled his own republicanism, his belief in liberty, with an authoritarian God? You read over the passages where God himself speaks, and you gain, perhaps, a more sweeping conception of impersonal rule, of cosmic law, and of man's place in the universe, than you could have had before. Even as we ponder over these ever-expanding questions of free will and responsibility, these conflicting principles of right government for the individual, for society, and for the world, these great burning exemplars of base and noble actions — simultaneously and insensibly the splendor of this earth and the spaciousness of its setting impress themselves on readers through the music and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rhythm of the lines. For the experience of beauty itself can be a moral experience, giving order and harmony and peace to the chaotic stuff of life.

I am afraid that these last paragraphs prove my point as to how difficult it is to illustrate even one facet of a liberal education. A work of art in particular, by its very complexity, leaves all simplifications and translations poor things. A good teacher is therefore more than satisfied if he can get a student to reread *Paradise Lost*, rehear Beethoven, or restudy Lincoln's thought. For here is endless delight, inexhaustible opportunity for growth.

The strongest conviction a year in the Pacific gave me was that liberal education must explain itself, and explain itself morally — that is to say, practically — to American citizens, if it is to play the part in the future which it should. Boy Scout training — a Boy Scout knife, for that matter — is more valued in the field than a dozen college courses. And whatever of his past learning in the arts a soldier takes into battle he will have to carry in his head and his memory. He does not carry much. The inability of the average soldier to handle general ideas is painful to think about. He is not even ordinarily aware of what his life is missing.

At least one indictment seems logical: teachers have not given their pupils much to carry with them. Part of this lack springs from teaching "subjects" and facts instead of ideas, part from the laxity of secondary school education — for which parents and popular opinion are principally to blame. Most of it comes from failing to orient the students at the beginning of any study — never explaining what the course is about, why it is being given, how it should fit in with other studies and with the student's own life. This needs thought. But rather than committee reports and introductions to college catalogs, it needs each teacher's own deep-seated beliefs clearly stated at the outset to his students, developed slowly and thoroughly, even argued about. The student should come to college feeling like a dynamo that will run on its own power, not like a wheelbarrow into which professors dump bricklets of knowledge to be carted away. But the teachers had better be ready with high-powered answers to that most dynamic and disturbing of all his questions: "What are the advantages?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Elegy

Irene Orgel

You cannot say he died when he was killed,
But only that his living was annulled;
The growth averted;
The egg aborted.

For dying is a slow, a life-long thing.
You have to take your time, my boy, for spring
To warm to summer; summer mellowing
Into the deep decline. The pith
Must slowly parch, the hair
Unloose itself, grow hoar,
And every sense fade slowly into death.
The graveyard cannot readily digest
A rich repast.
And to die virgin with the strength untried —
You cannot say he died.

What do you say of portents and of signs,
Clear as the dawn, straight as an arrow
Pointing towards tomorrow?
You know the language, tell us what it means.
What of the card brought proudly home from school
With "promise — promise" written on it? Fool
To believe, to trust! Oh imbecile
To dream! The tutor stroked his beard,
"He will be heard from." Quick! Revoke the word!
For songs unsung are silent and unheard.

And over promise — promise, write ANNULLED,
And sound it as a knell at evening tolled.
(The pledge is canceled and the promise unfulfilled.)
But do not say he died when he was killed.

© Born in England, IRENE ORGEL came to the United States in 1939. She is now doing graduate work in the field of comparative literature at Columbia University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What We Hope from Thomas Mann

Albert Guérard

THERE are uncrowned sovereigns of the spirit. Voltaire was such a king, and after him Goethe, Victor Hugo, Tolstoy. "The monarchy of wit" is the most substantial of all; few scholars could tell offhand who was rector, bishop or provost of Paris *under* Villon; and by the side of Tolstoy, the tsars who strutted in his lifetime are shadows. Yet this eminence is elusive; it is the miraculous component of antagonistic forces. The King of Humane Letters is not the rebel or the pioneer. He is not permitted to voyage through strange seas of thought alone. But neither can he be King Log, inert in contented conformity. He must win the respect of the artists and the acclaim of the untutored. Above the strife, he is a vital part of the strife; timeless, he is a living force in the events of the day. No rootless cosmopolitan is eligible, yet the chosen ruler must spurn and transcend the petty "sacred egoism" of his tribe. He must be of this earth, wise in his generation, a shrewd, capable, sociable man; yet he must live also on a different plane: he is fated to be, half-consciously, a legend, a symbol, a myth.

Such is the greatness that the times have thrust upon Thomas Mann; it cannot crush his own inherent greatness. Zola, Wells, Bernard Shaw, deliberately worked for mastership — not unworthily, yet the artists in them suffered from the strain. Anatole France submitted to his elevation, with a rueful deprecatory smile; and posterity smiled in return, with a touch of irony and

© Professor of general literature at Stanford University, ALBERT GUÉRARD is the author of numerous books, including *Preface to World Literature* and *Europe, Free and United.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pity. Not so with Thomas Mann. His position is secure, because he neither sought it nor shunned it. He accepted the burden, as Eisenhower did, with earnestness, and with simplicity.

Such a burden is never light: even a sense of humor brings little relief. At the present hour, it demands superhuman strength. For what we expect of Thomas Mann is an achievement more complex, more far-reaching than Eisenhower's. It is for Mann (not single-handed of course, but as the responsible, the indispensable leader) to win the decisive battle, now that Eisenhower has cleared the way. This war will not be over until catharsis has come to the German soul.

The task is not to destroy, but to purify, and Thomas Mann can direct us. Not because he is a "clever" writer and a "best-seller." If these vulgar advantages are not wholly irrelevant, it is only because they enhance his opportunity. Fame is an amplifier: it enables a man to speak gently, and be heard. Thomas Mann — and, I believe, Thomas Mann alone — is fully qualified to bring, not appeasement, but atonement. For he came to us, and was accepted by us, grown to his full stature, such as Germany had made him. He has gone through the shadow of death with his people. He could not serve the world so well today if he had not written *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* twenty years before *The Coming Victory of Democracy*. He can save Germany from despair; he can save us from complacency.

I need hardly say that I do not believe Thomas Mann should go into politics, least of all into German politics — the Lamartine of a Second Republic. At the proper moment, he has not shirked the rough-and-tumble of civic life. Today, he belongs to the world, and he belongs to us. He can serve Germany best by serving the world. And to fulfill his appointed task, he needs serenity.

II

Thomas Mann is Europe. No work could be more deeply rooted in its native soil than *Buddenbrooks*, but European literature is one. Mann received his impulse to novel writing from the doubly alien Goncourts. He composed his Lübeck epic (which horrified

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lübeck) in Rome and Munich. To me, brought up in France, his Lübeck was not stranger than Mauriac's Bordeaux; to Edmond Jaloux, it evoked his native Marseilles. The commercial background reminded me at times of *Soll und Haben*, at times of *Dombey and Son*, at times of *The Forsyte Saga*. If its subdued irony is consciously akin to Theodor Fontane's, it bears a likeness also to the quiet humor of William Dean Howells. Every writer is unique: themes, moods, techniques, ignore political and linguistic boundaries. Art for Art's Sake, Decadence, which Mann used with contrapuntal effects in his decline and fall of merchant princes, were European motives in the decade that preceded *Buddenbrooks*. Mann alone could have written *Death in Venice*, and he wrote it alone. Yet it reveals a temporal affinity with his elders, d'Annunzio, Barrès and Gide — not to mention Oscar Wilde.

Already before the first World War, Mann was, not a political novelist, but a social critic, perhaps without knowing it. The chronicle of *Buddenbrooks* implied a satire, not of a family and of a city, but of the bourgeois order. Its secure wealth creates opportunities for culture which it cannot satisfy. In the bourgeois scheme of things, culture, an ornament and therefore a parasite, becomes a disease; it preys upon the system which has made it possible. The bourgeois who ceases to be pure Philistine is doomed. But the writer whose art is severed from the *mores* of his people is spineless, defenseless. Gustav von Aschenbach welcomes physical annihilation, because he feels annihilation within. The center of his life has become a tragic futility, an ardent quest without hope and without purpose.

To Thomas Mann himself, by all accounts, *Königliche Hoheit* is but a fairy tale. Prince meets Princess, and they live happy ever after. I read it about the same time as Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan*, and I saw in both the same satirical intent. It is almost impossible for a dynastic ruler to be a full-grown man. His education is unreality. Wherever he turns, he sees the same admiring conventional smile. Bluster as he might, Wilhelm II of the withered arm was another Klaus Heinrich with the crippled hand; the gaudy empire with its antiquarian trappings, like the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

duodecimo principality in the novel, would have fallen into shabby-gentility and decay, if it had not been saved by commerce and industry. Aristocracies (of blood as well as of mind) cut off from the common earth must wilt and rot.

When the first World War broke out, Thomas Mann reluctantly but deliberately left the Ivory Tower. He fought — in 630 closely packed pages — against the forces which were assailing Germany: Western Liberalism, "Civilization." But his guiding thought was not "My country, right or wrong!" — the blasphemous fallacy which impelled Niemoeller to offer to kill in Hitler's name and for Hitler's glory. What he was attempting to vindicate was a conception of the world. Germany, in his eyes, was but the champion of the cause. He himself admitted later that the faith he was then defending — "the acceptance of a determinism," "the soil and the dead" — had been admirably expressed by a Frenchman, Maurice Barrès; while among the *Zivilisation-Literaten* upon whom his scorn was poured, stood his own brother Heinrich.

The battle he was fighting then was over a hundred and fifty years old. It was the conscious rebellion of Romantic primitivism against conventional Society, that Society which had reached its perfection with the Enlightenment. There again, alleged national psychology would be an unsafe guide. The masters of "obscurantism" were Vico and Rousseau as well as Hamann and Herder.

This rebellion was not sheer nihilism. At its origin, we find the idea to which Mann has ever remained true: that of human dignity. For all its cosmopolitanism and equalitarian ideology, the Enlightenment acknowledged, emphasized or even created distinctions which were humiliating to the majority of men. It had assumed a Franco-British pattern; Mediterranean Europe was branded as decadent, Nordic Europe as uncouth and "Gothic." It was sophisticated, the possession of an exquisite elite. The rebellion was at the same time national and democratic. It asserted that German ways were not necessarily inferior to French ways; that the rules of French tragedy, the etiquette of Versailles, the wit of Parisian salons, were not infallible badges of excellence. Not the Germans alone, but the common folk everywhere, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unsophisticated, the naive, were purer in spirit than the learned.

There was more to the Romantic rebellion than an inferiority complex. Beyond the victory of the bourgeois Enlightenment, the Romanticists could descry only a world that was colorless and mean. Adam Smith pointed to the Promised Land where the Profit Motive would hold undivided sway. To the unwary, the Enlightenment seemed to ignore the power of the irrational, for good and evil. The Encyclopedists appeared to live on a smooth, well-lit plane, which was but a small, obvious, uninteresting section of reality. This impression was not fully justified. Voltaire was conscious of the "dark forces," which he called "*L'Infâme*," and Diderot felt strongly the power of imagination and passion. The deeper difference is that the Enlightenment was disciplined effort, and Romanticism surrender. There is an idyllic, a quietistic brand of surrender: "Relax; fret not; in Nature and in Nature's God you will recover innocence and bliss." There is a tragic, a daimonic kind: "Let yourselves be carried by the profound, *chthonic* forces, and you will feel through your whole being the glory of their power, even though the end be destruction." Two ways — poles asunder — of not resisting evil.

To complicate matters, the great battle of the eighteenth century, which is still raging, was and remains three-cornered. Romanticism in its purity is not conservative, but radical. It is not satisfied with "the wisdom of prejudice." It assails civilization as an elaborate, oppressive superstructure, whether it be founded upon tradition or upon reason. It was Conservatism, forced out of its ancient citadel, Tradition, that sought refuge in Romantic darkness. In some essential aspects, Romanticism was an appeal to the people, and represented "the wave of the future," but it became a highly successful camouflage for superstitions and privileges: "Enemies of reason, unite!" Mann has very aptly defined that trend: "There is within Romanticism a historical school which may be described as reactionary. One finds in it that pious passion for the night, that Joseph-Görres complex of Earth, Folk, Nature, the Past and Death — a world of thought and feeling whose magic is well-nigh irresistible. . . ." It is the world of Wagner, of Thomas Mann — and of Hitler.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The kinship cannot be denied. It has not been renounced: in his fine essay *Kultur und Sozialismus*, Mann explicitly, courageously refuses to abjure his *Betrachtungen*. In *The German Record*, William Ebenstein dwells heavily on that point. No doubt it would be ludicrous to equate Mann with Hitler: both redeemed or both damned. Fellow travelers come to the parting of the ways. I have worked all my life for Franco-German reconciliation; but there was a moment when I turned against Otto Abetz. I have labored for peace: yet I had to fight those who advocated defending justice "by all means short of war and that would not lead to war." We must be ready, at any moment, to denounce the lunatic fringe. Above all, we must be on our guard against the men who "muscle in," who seek to turn to their own sordid gain all sacred things — religion, patriotism, art and love.

But it is well to remember the common background. Yes, the German people, in their bewilderment, took flight into the primitive, the subconscious, the dark forces of the blood and the earth. They surrendered to an ideology which had no power to withstand the monstrous madness of Hitler. But that ideology was Thomas Mann's. He had denounced as shallow and Philistine the Western cult of the intellect. And, among the cultured, he was not alone. Even an all-too-conscious artist, a cosmopolitan, like Stefan Zweig, who seemed destined to be a *Zivilisation-Literat*, had followed the same trend and extolled the daimonic. Let those who have never been false to the Enlightenment, never sneered at "logic" and "clarity," cast the first stone.

What made Hitler's Germany formidable was the conjunction of Romantic madness and Prussian efficiency — the army, the state. Here again Thomas Mann was with the many. He did not realize the fundamental evil of these magnificent creations when they became idols instead of tools. The army and the state had killed conscience; but they had no spiritual power of their own. They were but instruments after all, and they could not resist, when they were picked up by a demented primitive. The army and the state in their perfection were incarnated in Frederick the Great; and Thomas Mann had praised that sharp, intellectual,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Enlightened" cynic, the least Wagnerian of men. No less illogically, Heinrich Mann, the *Zivilisation-Literat*, worshipped Napoleon.

We must consider Thomas Mann therefore as the exponent, not as the accuser, of the German spirit. He followed the same road as millions of other Germans. Confessedly, it was a perilous path. Those who attempted it tumbled easily into Hitlerism. But Hitlerism was the abyss, not the goal. The sanity of genius kept Thomas Mann steady; many, who were not criminal at heart, fell. Climbing back to sanity will be hard.

It must be hard. I have no thought of sparing the Germans' feelings. Any conversion at the point of the sword, even if it be perfectly sincere, is a wrench, and is apt to leave a dangerous wound. I wish another way of salvation had been possible. Harshness is now the only cure, as Thomas Mann told the German people on the day of unconditional surrender.

But we did not ask of Thomas Mann when he cast in his lot with us, we cannot ask of the German people, that they should abjure their entire past and adopt *in toto* our way of life. We cannot be so criminally smug as to offer ourselves to our enemies as patterns of perfection. We cannot hold up to them as an ideal our own frailties and blemishes. We cannot tell them that a *realistic* policy based on force is monstrous when it is called the Axis and virtuous when it is called the Big Three. We cannot tell them: "Be humble; work hard; when you have served your sentence, you may graduate into party politics and the profit motive." We cannot offer to them as a spiritual guide the religion of the average "Liberal," threading his bemused way in the middle of the road. We cannot help them out of the pit and lead them into a morass.

The Germans must transcend their follies — and so must we. The way to world harmony is not assimilation, standardization, *Gleichschaltung:* that is a Totalitarian nightmare. It is the method which the French have at last adopted for their colonies: *converging evolution*. We do not want to Americanize Germany, and we do not want America to be Germanized. Our hope is that the best in Germany and America will ultimately meet and merge.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Such has been Thomas Mann's achievement. He has not altered his course. What he has gone through, what he has left behind, remains an integral part of his being. He is the Thomas Mann of *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*, and the Thomas Mann of *Betrachtungen*. He has skirted the abyss and emerged into safety, not merely with us, but ahead of us. *The Coming Victory of Democracy* might easily have turned into a Fourth of July address. He has made it a challenge. He has restored dynamism to our faith. He has made us realize that human dignity cannot be attained simply through magic formulae such as liberty, equality, the will of the people. It must be deserved. The eternal verities are not static, as of 1776. They call for constant purification and constant action. Democracy is unceasing peaceful revolution. The immediate goal Thomas Mann assigns to us is social democracy, or, to borrow a French phrase, "economic humanism." Before the world reaches that stage, the Germans will have much to unlearn. But so shall we. The coming victory of democracy is above all a victory over our own sloth, selfishness and confusion.

Perhaps we had too easy a time on this rich continent, without dangerous neighbors. We were apt to forget the "dark forces" under a thin veil of comfort and reasonableness. Those forces are there. They cannot be denied, but they can be tamed. Perhaps the most profound and the most helpful of Mann's essays is *Freud's Position in the History of Modern Thought*. To many, it was Freud who revealed the unconscious and the subconscious. He gave romantic intuition the confirmation of experimental science. His mission, however, was not to capitulate, but to heal. He explored, but he cleansed the abyss. He brought light into the recesses. Freud was the exact reverse of an "obscurantist." The light he used was that of the intellect. Feeble it may seem, but it is persistent, and it conquers. Freud proclaimed as his ideal "the primacy of reason." Thomas Mann's last great public effort before he left Germany was an "Appeal to Reason." So Romantic confusion is transcended, and the Enlightenment triumphs at last. But it is an Enlightenment that conquers, absorbs, organizes, not one that simply denies.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mackinder's Heartland

Hans W. Weigert

LAY thine ear to the ground and list' if thou can'st hear the tread of travellers."

Halford Mackinder * has listened to the ominous sounds from the earth longer and more intensely than any other living student of human geography. From time to time, he has recorded his impressions in brief statements which combined geographic wisdom with prophetic vision. The prose of these statements is rare and forceful poetry. To Mackinder geography is indeed "an art of expression parallel to and complementary to the literary arts . . . it ranges values alongside of measured facts. Hence 'outlook' is its characteristic."

While the shadows cast before a troubled mankind were growing, Mackinder's words increasingly became warnings. Yet nobody seemed to listen to the voice that told of the "tread of travellers" in the darkness. In 1904 and again in later years, Mackinder, unheeded, spoke of the portentous footfalls. Then, a few years ago, his message suddenly returned "as a ghost revisiting a world in which it lived without much honor." The ideas of the now octogenarian Mackinder burgeoned into significance in the turmoil of the second World War and overnight became imperatives for armchair strategists. "Heartland" and "World Island" were uncritically accepted as indispensables in a new geographical

◎ HANS W. WEIGERT is associate professor of geography and international relations at Carleton College. Professor Weigert and Vilhjalmur Stefansson are joint authors of *Compass of the World* (Macmillan, 1944). The maps appearing in Professor Weigert's article are by Richard E. Harrison, and are reprinted, with the permission of The Macmillan Company, from *Compass of the World.*

* Halford Mackinder will be eighty-five on February 15, 1946.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jargon — in spite of, or, often, because of the fact that its most eloquent sponsors were in doubt as to how to define the boundaries of that mysterious region "Heartland."

They were curiously attracted by the mystery and glamour woven around the Heartland and World Island catchwords of what seemed to be a new geography. Their curiosity increased when they learned that Mackinder's warnings, addressed to the Peacemakers assembled in Paris in 1919, had been duly noted and clearly understood by one of the enemy — General Karl Haushofer, who initiated the blueprints for a "transcontinental bloc" reaching from the Rhine to the Yangtze. It was to be based upon collaboration between Germany and Japan with the U.S.S.R. and China, and would result eventually, by "peaceful penetration," in German leadership among the great land Powers. While the German general staff adopted Haushofer's teachings, Hitler discarded them when he committed the decisive blunder of World War II in ordering his generals to attack the Soviet Union.

The mysteries of the Heartland and the effect which Mackinder's ideas had had on the enemy were exciting enough to occupy the interest of his readers in 1942 and later, and to distract them from the broader aspects of his political world geography. However, it is these broader aspects which are the problems of a new generation of peacemakers.

Mackinder was outstanding among modern geographers in showing history — geography set in motion — to be part of the life of the world organism, and in basing a system of human geography on the thesis that the world has become a *closed unit.* To stress this basis of Mackinder's approach to political geography at a time when "global war" and "global geography" are current coin sounds like carrying coals to Newcastle. "Global" concepts, however, are of recent date. It remains to be seen whether they will survive the war or whether competing and contrasting closed-space ideas, such as "geographic isolation" or "continentalism," will not regain the ground they have lost since Pearl Harbor. Mackinder's contribution will be fully appreciated only if we realize now that the postwar temptation will be to build a politico-geographical world which would justify

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

continental regionalism, especially in North America and the U.S.S.R.

Mackinder assumed that what he described as the "Columbian epoch," a period of geographic exploration and expansion lasting four hundred years, had ended around 1900. He sought and found a new formula to express certain aspects of geographical causation in world history. The "Westward Course of Empire" concept, and Frederick J. Turner's doctrine of the passing of the frontier and its significance in American history, had been attempts in the same direction. But Mackinder went further. In 1904, he envisaged a new history characterized by a "closed political system" of world-wide scope. "Every explosion of social forces," he said, "instead of being dissipated in a surrounding circuit of unknown space and barbaric chaos, will be sharply re-echoed from the far side of the globe, and weak elements in the political and economic organism of the world will be shattered in consequence."

The "Heartland" specialists usually ignore these foundations of Mackinder's political geography. They forget that we cannot truly define "Heartland" or "World Island" unless we first understand the premises of Mackinder's thesis: the world has become a closed system; power, in this closed unit, is mobile on the land and in the air to a degree undreamed of in the Victorian age of sea power. The Victorian age is dead. Yet its ideas still live. Man finds it, to use Vilhjalmur Stefansson's succinct phrase, "easier to change the face of nature than to change his own mind."

II

Mackinder's consciousness of the passing of the Victorian sea power age made him see Europe and its political geography as subordinate to Asia. It is in Asia that land power and land-based air power have had their greatest opportunities to challenge established power positions in the world at large. The mobility of land power (not land power as such), in competition with the mobility of sea power, evolved as a decisive geopolitical feature of the twentieth century. By evaluating the competition and possible

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clash between sea and land power, Mackinder discovered the "pivot region of the world's politics": the Heartland of Eurasia. And he did not hesitate to project the effects which an increasing mobility of military and economic power in this area is bound to have on the rest of the world. In 1904, he saw that "the century will not be old before all Asia is covered with railways. The spaces within the Russian Empire and Mongolia are so vast, and their potentialities in population, wheat, cotton, fuel, and metals so incalculably great, that it is inevitable that a vast economic world, more or less apart, will there develop inaccessible to oceanic commerce."

This pivotal area Mackinder projected as an organic unit within the world unit. Inaccessible to ships but covered with a network of railways, the continental basins of Eurasia are seen as the homeland of a new Russia which is successor to the Mongol Empire. From its central position, Russia can exert pressure on Finland, Scandinavia, Poland, Turkey, Persia, and India. The centrifugal power which drove the horse-riding nomads of the steppes westward and southward against the settled peoples of Europe is still a living force in the Russian heartland. If ever it succeeded in expanding over the marginal lands of Eurasia, if ever it were able to use its continental resources for fleet-building, then, Mackinder felt, "the empire of the world would be in sight." And to leave no doubt about the direction of his fears, forty years ago he added: "This would happen if Germany would ally herself with Russia."

When Mackinder re-examined his original thesis at the close of the First World War, he found that his "thesis of 1904 still sufficed." Hence his warning: "Who rules Eastern Europe commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island. Who rules the World-Island commands the world." It became much too smooth a slogan when it was dusted off in our day. Most of those who used it persistently were fascinated more by the general appeal of the slogan than by its geographic realities.

The Heartland of Europe and Asia had essentially the same frontiers in 1918 as Mackinder's "Pivot Area" of 1904. It com-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prised the vast expanse of the continental inland basins of arctic and continental drainage which measure nearly half of Asia and a quarter of Europe, and which are inaccessible from the ocean. As a strategical concept, the Heartland includes all regions which can be denied sea power. Railways, growing and expanding inward, have changed its face continuously since 1904 and have tested Mackinder's thesis. The airplane has since appeared in skies over the Heartland as a new instrument of geographical surgery, and Mackinder greets it as an ally to land power in the Heartland.

The first World War Mackinder sees as the climax in the eternal conflict between continental land power and marginal power, backed and fed by sea power: "We have been fighting lately, in the close of the war, a straight duel between land power and sea power. We have conquered, but had Germany conquered she would have established her sea power on a wider basis than any in history, and in fact on the widest possible base."

The third and final test of the Heartland formula was undertaken by Mackinder in the article, "The Round World and the Winning of the Peace," which he wrote in 1943 for *Foreign Affairs*. To Mackinder, the test was positive; he found his concept "more valid and useful today than it was either twenty or forty years ago."

Yet while the original concept of the Heartland remained basically intact, its frontiers were significantly revised. The revisions were required in order to accommodate certain major changes in the political geography of the world since 1904 and 1918. The territory of the U.S.S.R. remains equivalent to the Heartland. But there is one rather important exception. A vast area within the Soviet Union which begins east of the Yenisei River and whose central feature is the Lena River is now split from the original Heartland. "Lenaland Russia" has an area of three and three-quarter million square miles but a population of only some six millions, in contrast to "Heartland Russia," which covers four and a quarter million square miles and has a rapidly growing population now numbering one hundred and seventy millions.

Heartland Russia, backed by the natural reserves of Lena-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

land, looms with greater power than the Heartland Mackinder envisaged in decades past. What earlier had seemed to be mere speculation had now grown into reality, and Mackinder could state as a fact that "except in a very few commodities the country is capable of producing everything which it requires." Again he views the open western frontier of the Heartland. His conclusion that "if the Soviet Union emerges from the war as conqueror of Germany, she must rank as the greatest land power on the globe" is slightly less emphatic than his vision of the approaching "empire of the world" (1904). Otherwise, the Britisher's view of the geopolitical relationship of Russia and Germany had remained unchanged.

III

Any attempt at a critique of Mackinder's powerful generalizations should begin with the acknowledgment of our indebtedness to the man who did more in our time than anybody else to enlist geography as an aid to statecraft and strategy. The fundamentals of his closed-space concept stand so firmly today that we almost forget how revolutionary the concept was when first formulated forty years ago. The same observation applies to Mackinder's land power thesis which, appearing at what seemed to be the height of the Victorian sea power age, seemed shocking and fantastic to many in the English-speaking world. But in reviewing his thesis today, we should remember that it is the concept of a man who viewed the world from "England . . . that utmost corner of the West." Only a Britisher could have written as Mackinder did. Recognizing this and taking account of the technological changes which have surpassed even Mackinder's imagination, we should have sufficient perspective today to speak critically of the theory of the Heartland.

It is perhaps not incidental that the logic of Mackinder's Heartland seems to reveal itself best on a Mercator world map (such as Mackinder used when he first laid out his blueprint). Here the Heartland lives up to its name. We see it surrounded by a huge arc forming an inner crescent which includes Germany, Turkey, India, and China. Beyond the crescent of peripheral

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

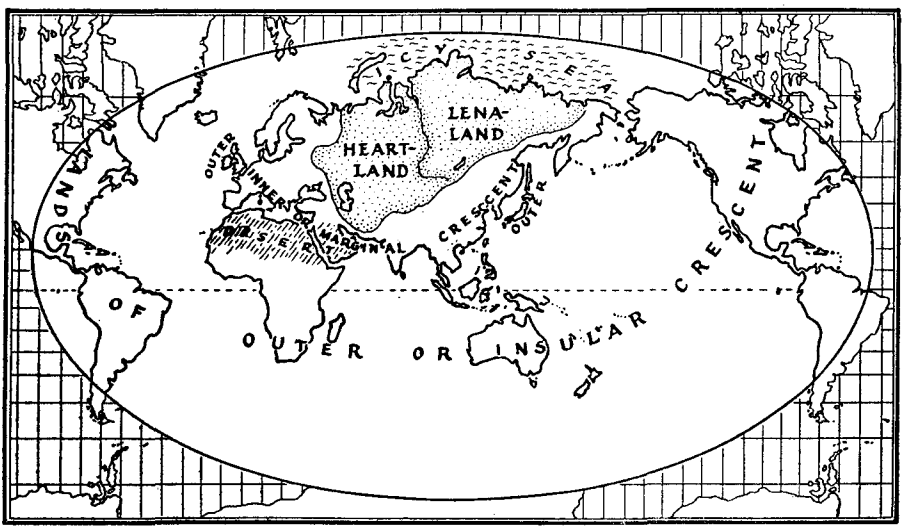


FIG. 1 — The oval encloses Mackinder's famous map, model for Haushofer's thinking, as it originally appeared in 1904. Since the oval obscures the fact that it is on the Mercator projection, the map here has been extended into the corners of the rectangle. The Mercator map, which influenced deeply German strategy, fails to reveal the crucial position of North America across the Polar Sea.

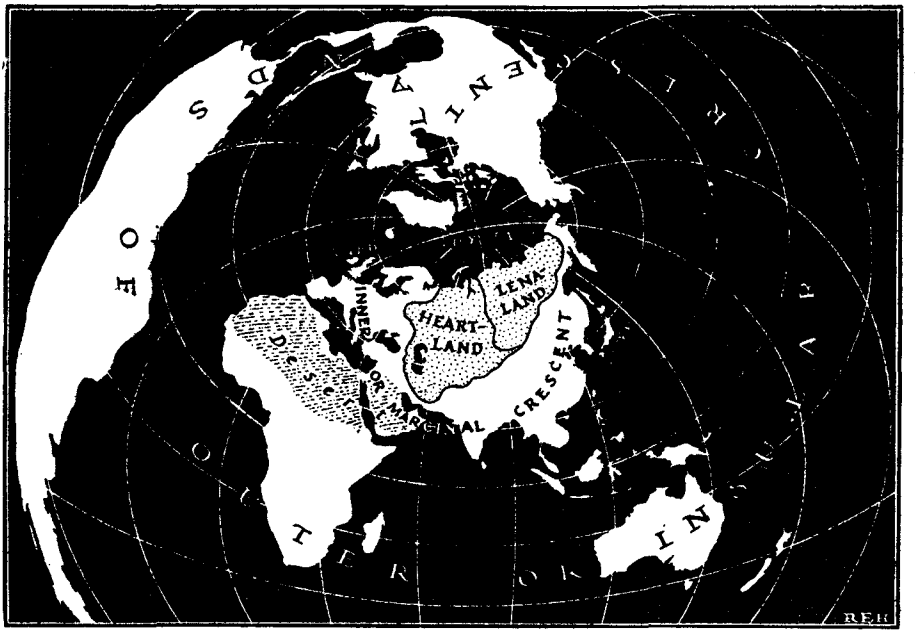


FIG. 2 — Mackinder's designations are here transposed to an azimuthal equidistant map centered in the Pivot Area or Heartland. This gives a more revealing picture of the relationship of the Heartland to the other continents.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

states, Mackinder envisaged an outer crescent which embraced Britain, South Africa, Australia, the United States, Canada, and Japan. Again the Mercator projection lent a helpful hand in constructing what seemed to Mackinder a "wholly oceanic" and "insular" crescent.

However, we find it difficult, if not impossible, to visualize this relation of the Heartland to a surrounding inner and outer crescent if we exchange the Mercator map for the globe or any azimuthal-equidistant map. The North America which seemingly was a part of a chain of insular Powers distant from the Heartland now becomes a geographical myth. Instead we see the Heartland and North America in destiny-laden vicinity. We see the Heartland over the top of the world as a politico-geographical reality, as the result of the lessons of a new geography of world air transport. We have a different view of the Heartland than Mackinder, who plotted it from Britain and with the destinies of Britain foremost in his mind. While time has verified Mackinder's concept of Russia's growing importance as a land Power in a pivotal area, the skyways of the Arctic Mediterranean give validity to a new way of regarding the geographical relations of North America and the U.S.S.R. The inaccessibility of the vast inland spaces of the Heartland became evident when the Heartland Power was attacked by Germany in the west, where the Heartland opens itself to invasion. But seen from North America and in terms of new communications, inaccessibility and vastness no longer conceal the Heartland from us. It lies no longer behind an impenetrable wall of isolation.

In his *Foreign Affairs* article, Mackinder seems to have made major revisions in his original concept of the relationship of the rest of the world to the Heartland. We have noticed that the original Heartland thesis remained basically unaltered, although the emphasis on the thinly populated "Lenaland" area has been toned down. But the surrounding crescents (and particularly North America as a member of the outlying insular Power group) are viewed by the Mackinder of 1944 in a different light. This is significant. The original British view which left North America seemingly isolated and beyond the sphere of power zones directly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

linked with the Heartland, has now been replaced by an Anglo-American world view.

Has Mackinder thus silenced his critics? I wonder. The critics have been few, and those who questioned the validity of his thesis stressed uniformly the pivotal importance of the densely populated regions of the coast- or rimlands. The overemphasis, however, on either inland or rimland location neglects the complementary character of the two, as well as their constantly changing values. Mackinder understood these dynamics clearly. He re-examined and revised his appraisal of the relationship between interior and peripheral; he perceived from Britain that the peripherals felt, more than ever, the shadow of the continental landmass in its expansionist movement. Thus he projected a new vision of the Heartland in its relation to the surrounding zones. In doing so, he envisaged the geographic link between the Heartland and the Anglo-American world in a new light. From Mercator he turned to the globe. Around the north polar regions he hung a "mantle" of deserts and wildernesses. From the Sahara Desert, the mantle extends to the deserts of Arabia, Iran, Tibet, and Mongolia. From there it spreads out across the "wilderness of the Lenaland" to the Laurentian shield of Canada and to the sub-arid belt of the United States.

Thus he constructed what seems to be a new "pivot of history": a zone including both the Heartland and the basin of the North Atlantic. Thereby Mackinder reveals a new fulcrum of world power, and a new relationship between the Heartland and the outer world. The enlarged pivotal area of 1944 is made apparent by drawing a great circle arc from the center of the Yenisei River across the Mid-Ocean to the center of the Mississippi valley. The arc leads across the bridgehead of France, over the stronghold of Britain — "a Malta on a grander scale" — to the vast arsenal of the eastern and central United States and Canada. This North American-British-French-U.S.S.R. bloc comprises a power fulcrum of one billion people. It neatly balances that other thousand million in the monsoon lands of India and China. "A balanced globe of human beings. And happy, because balanced and thus free."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But the balance is too neat and perfect to be true. Mackinder, by including the coastlands of Europe as well as the North American rimlands and central regions, has wisely acknowledged a significant geopolitical fact. North America is no longer part of a separate outer crescent; her security zone extends via Britain into the rimlands of western Europe. Yet Mackinder still looks at the world with British eyes. Britain is the vital link in his concept of the "Mid-Ocean" as the main artery which makes the United Nations bloc (without China) a life force. Does he not try to prove too much? Do not his own lessons of a phase of history in which land power (plus land-based air power) challenge the remnants of the Victorian age, guide us to additional routes which extend from North America to the Heartland?

Those routes do not touch Britain, although they touch, through Canada, lifelines of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Mackinder's latest vision pushes the "Lenaland" and with it the whole of Soviet Asia into the background. This seems logical if one views the Heartland from the British Isles. However, a view of the Heartland from any place in North America exposes the fact that the Mid-Ocean avenue is by no means the only one connecting North America and the Heartland. The established sea lanes of the North Atlantic are and will remain the cheapest avenues; but, in years to come, traffic will mount on the new highways and skyways to the Heartland across both the Alaska and the Greenland-Iceland bridges. While we are aware of the climatic barriers which always will hamper an American and Russian expansion northward and a large-scale colonization and land-utilization of their Arctic possessions, we cannot eliminate the northern links from the blueprints of a new world view. These links are represented not only by skyways but also by new inland communications and by sea lanes, opened by weather stations, planes, and ice breakers. Furthermore, there are new inland roads in the making which will connect both the Heartland and North America with China. The old front doors of China, in Hong Kong and Shanghai, are slowly disintegrating with the passing of colonial imperialism.

Mackinder's citadel of land power still stands — and mightier

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than ever. And it is not merely the Heartland quality of its landmass that accounts for its leading role in today's world theatre. Equally important are the wealth of its resources and the human intangibles which make a nation great. In the political and economic geography of a shrinking world, location is not a static element. Its value changes constantly. The United States and the Soviet Union are about to revise their politico-geographical contacts; the northward course of both nations accounts for some of the major changes. Equally, the relationship of China and the U.S.S.R. is expected to change radically. The long inland frontier between these two nations will grow in significance in the next few decades, and stimulating or contagious ideas will not be halted by ancient walls. Such contacts will affect the rest of the world and particularly the role of the Heartland.

Finally, there is the human factor: the differences in vitality among the great nations which are paramount among the factors that will change the relations of the Heartland to the rest of the world. The balance of manpower is shifting. At present, the shift favors the vigorously growing nations within the U.S.S.R. — and will continue to do so for decades to come. It is emphasized by the fact, stressed by Ellsworth Huntington, that biological inheritance has produced qualities in the Heartland people which compensate for its climatic handicaps. This trend but underlines the significance of Mackinder's Heartland vision. Yet a future cycle in the evolution of the world's population that is growing much too rapidly — growing in spite of the appalling blood sacrifices of the war — will make the demographic problems of new Powers, of China and India, a world problem. Moreover, it will affect deeply the power position of the Heartland people and of Western nations.

I am afraid that Mackinder's new balance of power doctrine, a world divided into two equal, "therefore free," hemispheres of one billion human beings each, is a structure built upon shifting sand. The weakness of Mackinder's doctrine does not lie in its emphasis on the citadel of land power as pivotal in world affairs. It lies rather in the attempt to construct a balance of power formula which can be applied permanently to the relationship of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Heartland and the rest of the world. Since Mackinder first started out to demonstrate how geographical sense is essential in acquiring a valid world view, new pivot areas have evolved and still others will emerge. The growth of American power particularly has prompted Mackinder to revise his formula. Other areas and their peoples will come of age, and new lines of communications will transform international relations. No balance of power thesis can solve permanently the geopolitical problems of tomorrow. That is the vital lesson which Mackinder himself taught us. The world's nations have realized that they henceforth must live "in a closed system in which they can do nothing of which the repercussion does not come back upon them from the very antipodes."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Reading of Keats (I)

Allen Tate

IT IS proper that we celebrate the hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the birth of John Keats by testing our powers of reading him. For the perpetual task of criticism, every generation or two, is to understand again the poetry of the past. Poetry which cannot survive this renewal of understanding, and live again in the critical sensibility of posterity, must contain some radical flaw of interest; it is perhaps in this sense that time is the test of poetry. This view, commonly held today, presupposes the continuity of tradition which with occasional lapses has come down to us from the Greeks. But whether the best English poets shall survive the coming age is a question bearing less upon their value for us than upon our capacity to receive it. If Keats goes unread by the next generation, whose memory will not go back to the era which now seems to be closing, I cannot think that the failure will be his. He will remain one of the great English poets for a later generation to rediscover.

This sounds like the prediction of Colvin in 1917, and I see no reason to argue generally with the Victorian estimate. Perhaps of Keats alone of the English romantics does this estimate still hold, possibly because the great claims were never made for him that were made for Wordsworth and Coleridge. If definitive criticism were possible, Bridges' "A Critical Introduction to Keats" (1894, revised 1914) and A. C. Bradley's "The Letters of Keats" (*Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, 1909) might be said to realize it; and to these should be added the fine textual study, Professor Ridley's *Keats's Craftsmanship* (1933), and Professor C. D. Thorpe's *The Mind of John Keats* (1926). I do not put Mr. Murry's *Keats and Shakespeare* (1926) in this list because I find its main argument

© Distinguished poet and critic, ALLEN TATE is editor of *The Sewanee Review*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

incomprehensible, though the book is valuable for many brilliant insights.

So, apart from the three full-length biographies by Houghton, Colvin, and Miss Lowell, there are four excellent critical studies of Keats, two from the late Victorian age, two from our own: there is probably less useless writing about Keats than about the other great English romantics. The reasons for this are obvious if a little hard to state. The bulk of Keats's work is comparatively slight; at his best (the odes, "Lamia," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and parts of "Hyperion") he has a masterful simplicity of purpose and control; in these poems, with the single exception of "Hyperion," the influences are so well assimilated that only the most trivial academic mind could suppose Keats's relation to the "history of ideas" to have more than the value of a few monographs. In this I take it "he is with Shakespeare." It has been easier for the critics to get at the essentials of Keats than of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, who conceal more traps to catch scholars.

This is not to say that Keats was, in the sense of the phrase common a few years ago, a "pure poet." He was the great poet of his age, in the fullest sense; and even Matthew Arnold almost let himself see that he was. Arnold's essay remains one of the best "estimates" of Keats in the Victorian style (which goes back to Johnson) of combined moral and critical judgment. Perhaps Arnold was the last great critic to use it effectively; for since its decay in the impressionism of Pater and in the dilettantism of the "literary essay" of the nineties and early nineteen-hundreds, we have been getting a new sort of criticism which was brought in by Eliot's *The Sacred Wood* (1920).

Arnold's essay still has a certain interest in the history of Keats's reputation, yet it must interest us now as perhaps the best evidence of Arnold's almost perverse use of critical standards. More than any other poet Keats pinned him upon the horns of his dilemma: "Natural magic" and/or "moral interpretation." It has been said (by whom I do not remember) that the ambiguousness of Arnold's judgment of Keats was due to his humorless sense of responsibility for the poetry of his age: Keats was the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

greatest "natural magician" since Shakespeare, but what poetry then *needed* was moral interpretation, and Keats had been a harmful example. This is not the place to examine Arnold's critical dialectic (that has been admirably done by Mr. Trilling), yet it is not beside the point to remark Arnold's failure to see that in Keats's "principle of beauty in all things" lay a possible way out of his dilemma. Even the *Letters* (among the great letters of the world) give a clue to its significance, to say nothing of the structure of the odes. Arnold was not interested in structure unless it was a structure of action inviting moral interpretation. He saw Keats quite simply as a "sensuous" poet.

I have belabored this question more than either Arnold or it deserves (not more than they merit) because I think it is necessary, before proceeding to Keats's poetry, to refer briefly to my own disabilities as a critic of Keats. They are not unlike Arnold's. It would be ludicrous to confess that I lack Arnold's general powers, or more particularly his capacity for awareness of what he did not like (it was this *awareness* that raised him above the level of the conventional Victorian moralist); but it is not beside the point to warn readers of this essay that my attitude towards Keats is reverent, yet distant without disinterestedness. Whether Keats is what we *need* I do not know; yet we neither want him nor use him. For the past fifteen years the direction of Anglo-American poetry has been rather towards Shelley than Keats, towards "Godwin-perfectability" and social consciousness than towards a dramatic-symbolic style.

I hope I shall not sound like Margaret Fuller if I say that I am not indifferent to the utmost capacity of men for social and individual perfection; I simply do not think that poetry should be limited to exhorting men to these goods. Yet my lack of sympathy with the social school does not qualify me as a critic of Keats, in spite of my conviction (which was Arnold's unhappy conviction) that Keats was in one of the great modes of poetry. It is perhaps a mode inaccessible to us today. I shall not try, because it is too difficult, to state directly why I think this obstacle exists; my understanding of it, such as it may be, will be implied in what I am about to say of "Ode to a Nightingale" — in my

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opinion Keats's great poem in spite of its imperfect detail, greater than "Ode to Autumn," which because of its purity of tone and style Bridges ranks first among the odes. "Ode to Autumn" is a very nearly perfect piece of style but it has little to say. Because I believe that "Ode to a Nightingale" at least tries to say everything that poetry can say I am putting it at the center of this discussion.

II

The testimony of the criticism of Keats which I have read is that he was a pictorial poet in the Spenserian tradition. I would add to this very general statement the observation that his progress from "Endymion" to the revised "Hyperion" is in a direct line, at the end of which he achieved under Milton's influence a new kind of blank verse, but in it he could not control an heroic action. In a letter to Reynolds (September 21, 1819), he said: "I have given up Hyperion — there were too many Miltonic inversions in it. . . ." And in a letter to George Keats, written six days later, he declared, "I have but lately stood on my guard against Milton. Life to him would be death to me." I think the second of these explanations, general as it is, comes nearer to the truth. He could not write Miltonic verse without eventual frustration because he lacked a Miltonic subject; it would be "death" to him. For the framework of "Hyperion," of the more human, revised version no less than of the first version, is pictorial, with declamatory summaries of action which Keats does not present. It is a succession of plastic scenes.

If this had been the only line of development from "Endymion," we should not, of course, have got the odes; and Keats would have remained a youthful experimenter of genius, considerably above Chatterton but not so impressive as Shelley. The other line runs, in the order of time, from "Endymion" to the odes; but perhaps technically, as Ridley has argued, the line is from the sonnets to the odes. That is to say, his experiments with the sonnet led him to modifications of the form which gave us the great stanzas of the "Grecian Urn" and the "Nightingale." And within that narrow, pictorial, but potentially dramatic compass

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he had something ready to say that he could not have said in the other kinds of verse that he had tried.

"The Eve of St. Agnes" is his masterpiece in the Spenserian tradition of *ut pictura, poesis*, and the originality is the freshness of the language. Far more instructive for technical reasons (reasons which cannot be disconnected from the higher reasons) is the versification of "Lamia," based partly upon Dryden but — as Professor Ridley shows — in no sense imitative. For example, "Lamia" has proportionately three times as many run-on lines as Dryden's "Fables" taken as a whole, 33 per cent being run-on; there is a large number of tercets ending with Alexandrines, but there are no feminine endings. The result of this adaptation of Dryden's verse is a movement of great speed and flexibility, firm yet supple, and altogether the most original contribution to narrative verse of the nineteenth century. But it should be remembered that "Lamia" is a narrative of a minor mythological incident which Keats picked up in Burton, not epic action. Although Keats failed to sustain his blank verse because he could not fill it with action, he succeeded brilliantly with a new kind of verse in which the pictorial method supports the main effect, the simple action turning on a plot of recognition. For the moment we need not go into the symbolism, but it is significant that it was material which Keats found something like the perfect means to bring into form. Written in the summer of 1819 (Part I by mid-July), "Lamia" is the height of his achievement in the long poem. The important thing to remember is that Keats finished it at about the same time he abandoned "Hyperion."

I shall briefly anticipate the end towards which I am heading by setting down a few opinions which will both indicate its direction and gauge my understanding of Keats. "Lamia" is more closely related to the two great odes, the "Nightingale" and "Grecian Urn," than to "Hyperion"; and the fact that he could successfully revise "The Eve of St. Agnes" at the time he was finishing "Lamia" is as much proof as criticism needs that it is not too far from the materials and methods of a poem which some critics would put with the other narratives, "Isabella," and the fragmentary "The Eve of St. Mark." Moreover, we must think of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Lamia" and "The Eve of St. Agnes" along with the great odes as follows: "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode to Psyche," "To Autumn," and "Ode on Melancholy." This cluster of poems is the center of Keats's great work, and they all deal with the same imaginative dilemma — or if we wish to be biographical, the same conflict in Keats's experience. (I cannot agree with Bridges that there is anything in the sonnets as good as the best Shakespeare; I am convinced that they would not have won their great reputation apart from the other work, and I shall not discuss them here.)

The imaginative dilemma of Keats is, I assume, implicit in the poems, which are its best statement. The most that criticism ought to attempt is a kind of circulatory description of its movements, from poem to poem. Bridges' astute remark, that "Keats's art is primarily objective and pictorial, and whatever other qualities it has are as it were *added on to things as perceived*," contains critical insight of the first order. I have italicized *added on to things as perceived*, and I would double the italics of the two last words. They point directly to the imaginative limit of Keats's poetry, one horn of the dilemma out of which it does not move — and in which it must, if it is to exceed the *ut pictura, poesis* formula, seek some conversion of that limit.

I should thus offer (for what it is worth) the very general analysis: Keats as a pictorial poet was necessarily presenting in a given poem a series of scenes, and even in the narratives the action does not flow from inside the characters, but is governed pictorially from the outside. He is thus a painting poet, and would have earned Lessing's censure. But like every great artist, he knew (in his own terms, which are none of our business) that his problem was to work within his limitations, and to transcend them. He was a poet of space whose problem was to find a way of conveying what happens in time. For it is time in which dramatic conflict takes place, and it is only by conversion into dramatic actuality that the parts of the verbal painting achieve relation and significance. "The form of thought in Keats," says Mr. Kenneth Burke, "is mystical, in terms of an eternal present" — and I should add, in terms of the arrested action of painting.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

III

One of Keats's annotations to Burton's *Anatomy*, in the copy given him by Brown in 1819, in the great period, is as follows:

> Here is the old plague spot; the pestilence, the raw scrofula. I mean there is nothing disgraces me in my own eyes so much as being one of a race of eyes nose and mouth beings in a planet call'd the earth who all from Plato to Wesley have always mingled goatish winnyish lustful love with the abstract adoration of the deity. I don't understand Greek — is the love of God and the Love of women express'd by the same word in Greek? I hope my little mind is wrong — if not I could — Has Plato separated these lovers? Ha! I see how they endeavor to divide — but there appears to be a horrid relationship.

Keats had just read in Burton the chapter "Love-Melancholy" in which the two Aphrodites, Urania and Pandemos, appear: there is no evidence that he ever knew more about them than this quotation indicates. Professor Thorpe valiantly tries to show us that Keats must have known from his literary environment something of Plato's doctrine of love, but there is no reason to believe that he ever felt the imaginative shock of reading *The Symposium*, and of experiencing first-hand an intuition of a level of human experience that the Western World, through Platonism and Christianity, had been trying for more than two thousand years to reach. He apparently never knew that the two Aphrodites were merely the subject of Pausanias' speech, one of the preliminaries to Socrates' great dialectical synthesis. The curious thing about Keats's education is that it was almost entirely literary; he had presumably read very little philosophy and religion. He used the Greek myths not for the complete (if pagan) religious experience in them, but to find a static and sculpturesque emblem of timeless experience — his own and the experience of his age. Hence the pictorial method, and hence the necessity for that method.

In my reading of Keats I see his mind constantly reaching towards and recoiling from the experience, greatly extended, which is represented by the ambivalent Aphrodite. The conclusion of the sonnet, "Bright Star! . . ."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever — or else swoon to death. . . .

is not Keats's best poetry, but it states very simply the philosophical dilemma, the symbolic limit of which I have tried to see in terms of the double goddess. The immanence of the Uranian in the Pandemic goddess was not beyond the range of Keats's intellect, but it was at any rate, at the time of his death, imaginatively beyond his reach. His goddess, in so far as she is more than a decorative symbol in Keats, was all Uranian. To say in another way what I have already said, his faulty taste (which is probably at its worst in one of the lines in "Bright Star! . . .") lies in his inability to come to terms with her Pandemic sister. His pictorial and sculpturesque effects, which arrest time into space, tend to remove from experience the dramatic agitation of Aphrodite Pandemos, whose favors are granted and whose woes are counted in the actuality of time. (There is, of course, a great deal more in Keats than this obsessive symbol through which I see him; and there is also less of the symbol, explicitly presented, than my discussion would indicate. There are only eleven references to "Venus" in all Keats's poetry — he never calls her Aphrodite — and in no instance is very much done with her symbolically. She has only a fresh Botticellian surface, and one may observe that she is not mentioned in "Ode to Psyche.")

This "horrid relationship" between the heavenly and earthly Aphrodites had been in effect the great theme of Lucretius and St. Augustine, and it informed dramatically *The Divine Comedy*. It was perhaps the great achievement of the seventeenth-century English poets to have explored the relations of physical and spiritual love. Of this Keats seems oblivious, yet we must admit that an awareness of the imaginative and spiritual achievements of the past would not have ensured them to him, as our own excessive awareness fails to ensure them to us. In Keats's mind there was, as I have said (why it should have had, even in so young a man, an exclusive dominance, I do not know) a strong compulsion towards the realization of physical love, but he could not reconcile it with his idealization of the beloved. So we get what has been supposed to be a characteristically romantic atti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tude — that to *die* at the greatest intensity of love is to achieve that intensity without diminution.

If this is the romantic attitude — and there is no reason to believe that Wordsworth's domestic pieties and evasions, or Shelley's rhetorical Godwinism and watered-down Platonism, ever achieved *as experience* a higher realization of the central human problem than Keats did — if this is romanticism, then romanticism (or romantic poetry) represents a decline in insight and in imaginative and moral power. In the interval between

> So must pure lovers soules descend
> T'affections, and to faculties,
> Which sense may reach and apprehend,
> Else a great Prince in prison lies. . . .

and this:

> But Love has pitched his mansion in
> The place of excrement;
> For nothing can be sole or whole
> That has not been rent. . . .

— in the interval between Donne and Yeats there was evidently a loss in the range and depth of Western man's experience (as that experience was expressed in works of the imagination, and not merely in the Goethean or Wordsworthian good-will towards comprehensiveness or the inclusion of a little of everything). Keats seems to me to have been, in England at any rate, the master of the central experience of his age. His profound honesty, his dislike of system and opinion as substitutes for what the imagination is actually able to control, and his perfect artistic courage, will keep him not only among the masters of English poetry but among the few heroes of literature. To apply to Keats a remark of Eliot's about Arnold, I should say that he did not know because he lacked the maturity to know, the boredom; he knew a little of the horror; but he knew much of the glory of human life.

The second installment of Mr. Tate's anniversary article on Keats, which contains a detailed study of the great Odes, will appear in the Spring issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Saturday in the Country

Marie Gilchrist

The house stood there with the door stuck fast
To the swollen sill: Inside, a fly
Found wings when the stove had warmed the air
And forgot it was long past time to die.
Sun and clouds and a cool west breeze
Were timed to the instant of November,
Bright green watercress rocked in the brook
But nothing else was alive to remember.
Then a cricket leapt, and a stone I heaved
From the ground had a kernel of black ants under
And I saw, with winter about to begin,
Where still as a stone in the dry leaves yonder
A snake in a loose-flung coil received
What sun there was on his fate-gray skin.

© MARIE GILCHRIST's poem, "Warning the Trees," was published in the Summer 1945 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. We regret that we erroneously reported that Miss Gilchrist was formerly a member of the editorial staff of *The Reader's Digest;* she is on the *Digest* staff at present.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Day of War

Howard Fast

DECEMBER 21, 1778 was a day of war, one day out of the several thousand days during which America fought for her independence. Nothing of great import happened: no major battles were fought, no great decisions rendered. For Mr. Draper and Mr. Folsom, who published *The Independent Ledger and the American Advertiser*, at the corner of Winter Street in Boston, it was another routine day, and as such, it lost itself in the maw of history.

Today, indeed, it is very difficult to discover any more about these two gentlemen of the press than that they were good patriots, and, in my opinion, good newspaper men. In that war, as in this one, there were hot patriots, lukewarm ones, and some very, very cold ones. Any issue of the *Independent Ledger* told you where Draper and Folsom stood — and this particular Monday of 1778 was no exception.

Some editors would say, war news on the front page, and that finishes it. Draper and Folsom were of a more elastic turn of mind, and when, the day before, Tom Paine's seventh Crisis paper had arrived by post from Philadelphia, smoking hot with anger, demolishing the arguments for a negotiated peace, they threw out their front page and ran the seventh Crisis. Today, we call it orientation; they considered it of some value too.

Take the matter of privateers, merchant ships privately fitted out, but armed with guns and commissioned by the government to raid enemy commerce. The cool patriots disliked this practice; Draper and Folsom approved of it heartily, and ran the following dispatch from Philadelphia prominently on page two:

© HOWARD FAST is the author of several historical novels, including *Citizen Tom Paine* and *Freedom Road*. Mr. Fast is now working on a book on John Altgeld.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Philadelphia, Nov. 26.
On Friday arrived in this port Capt. Martin, in a letter of marque schooner, from the Island of St. Croix, which he left the 28th of October. . . . On the 9th of November he took a schooner from New York (occupied by the British) for St. Augustine, which had sailed in company with a fleet of a hundred and nineteen sail, with 5,000 troops on board, bound to the British West India Islands . . .

Naturally, such small matters elude history; but you may be sure that the loyal citizens of Boston smacked their lips as they read this over their coffee. They had dealt with their own quislings sometime back, when they retook their city; now, for a quisling schooner to be cut out of an enemy convoy, under the noses of battleships, tickled their Yankee fancy in precisely the right place. In column three of page two, they found another dispatch that made them nod with satisfaction:

Fish-kill, December 10.
His excellency Gen. Washington passed through this town on the 1st. inst. on his way to Jersey. The day following the Marquis de la Fayette left this town for Boston, where he is to embark for France.

The Fishkill correspondent was exact but uninspired; he gave you the facts and let you work the rest out for yourself. Today, no doubt, military security would forbid this kind of information, the more so since the General and the Marquis were moving through country nominally held by the British. On the other hand, the Bostonians could take pleasure in the ineffectiveness of British occupation.

This was a red-letter day for Fishkill and the local correspondent. In the next story, he really spreads himself:

Fish-kill, December 10.
On Saturday last, about twenty British ships, brigs, and smaller vessels made an expedition up the North River [the Hudson], as far as King's Ferry, where they destroyed two or three huts, and took off a barrel of stinking fish; they seemed disposed to do further mischief, but a large detachment was sent off by General M'Dougal, which arriv'd in time to defend the place. — They went off with precipitation. On their way down the river they burnt in a wanton, cowardly manner, two or three defenseless houses at or near Tarry-Town.

How the art of journalism has fallen! It's true that some of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

facts seem uncertain (for instance, the leeway left in describing the number of houses burned), but there is no doubting which side this correspondent is on. Twenty British ships deploy up the Hudson, but our Fishkill man will grant them no more booty than one barrel of stinking fish. More power to him! And that line: "They went off with precipitation." There is, indeed, classic understatement, "wanton and cowardly. . . ." Today, that would draw a sharp word from the editor: leave opinions out and report the facts. I take my hat off to the unknown correspondent; I'm all for his opinions. And speaking of opinion, Draper and Folsom sneak in this item — entirely hearsay, I'm afraid, and without even a dateline:

> A correspondent says, the inhabitants of New York are heartily sick of their protectors, and wish the time may speedily come when they may be left to themselves; the greater part would rather leave themselves to Whig mercy than British clemency and protection any longer.

Well, one can see the need for this sort of thing. New York has been occupied by the enemy for over two years, and the citizens of Boston would like to think that a bona fide underground was in operation. Unfortunately, too many citizens of New York have turned traitor, and when the enemy leaves, several thousand of them will go with him, rather than take their chances with the angry revolutionists. Nor is any revolt within the city brewing. Though one is led to suspect that Draper and Folsom cooked up this item themselves, one can forgive them. They're fighting a war.

However, even with a good part of our land devastated by war and occupied by the enemy, life goes on. Two small ads are both homely and reassuring:

> To be sold, A LARGE, HANDSOME IRON STOVE
> Enquire of the Printers.

And even more earthy:

> WANTED, A NURSE WITH
> a good Breast of MILK,
> either in Town or Country,
> For further Particulars enquire of the printers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A people's war being concerned with culture and the arts, as well as with the main business of defeating the enemy, we find on page three a good-sized advertisement for a book:

NOW IN THE PRESS,
And in about three weeks will be completed,
THE PUBLICATION OF
Hubbard's *History of the*
Indian Wars
In New-England.

But the final touch, which clinches the argument that the histories have lost everything but the dates and the barest facts, occurs in the lower left hand corner of page three. It is an unostentatious dispatch, concerning British troops of occupation in Queens Village, on Long Island:

. . . A few nights ago a drove of one of the neighbour's hogs got out of their enclosure, when finding themselves released from confinement, they kicked up their heels, grunted, and ran directly toward the enemy's quarters, upon approaching which, the advanced sentries hearing an unusual noise, concluded they were going to be attacked, gave the alarm to the rear guards, who immediately communicated it to the main body, when they all in one universal consternation fled, leaving most of their arms behind them, and ran helter skelter down to their boats, launched them, and embarked before they discovered their mistake. — Thus were 150 *brave Veterans* employed in the fruitless attempt to conquer America, completely routed by a herd of swine, even without the Devil's having entered into them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Premature Death of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1945)

An Obituary and a Footnote

Eric Russell Bentley

CARLYLE's credit stands lower in 1945 than it has since the days when he was still failing to find a publisher for *Sartor Resartus*. His "good" influence lasted till — early in the twentieth century — it petered out in women's clubs and elementary college classes. His "evil" influence has also ended — for the present at any rate — with the death of Hitler and Mussolini, exactly 150 years after Carlyle's birth. Abandoned even by freshman English, the last refuge of yesterday's favorites, Carlyle is now a nullity.

He will probably remain so. The life of his spirit might plausibly be dated 1795–1945. Few men live so long, and yet it is rather sad to think that one who has cut so large a figure in the world can in the end be committed to the most real of all deaths, oblivion. The titans of war and politics one is prepared to forget. Better so. But it is hard to let a titan of the spirit slip from sight. Is not literature immortal? It is commonly supposed to be so, and one cannot doubt that the imaginative element in a man's work is, in a sense, imperishable. But the fame of Carlyle was never literary. It was personal and moral. *Thomas Carlyle; How To Know Him* was the title of Bliss Perry's tribute. This is a debilitated late form of the Carlyle worship which in its heyday had been a moral passion. Today such a passion — even when diluted for the children or perverted for the fascists — is unthinkable.

© ERIC RUSSELL BENTLEY, author of *A Century of Hero-Worship*, is assistant professor of English at the University of Minnesota, and an advisory editor of *The Kenyon Review*. His *The Playwright as Thinker* will be published soon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Carlyle is dead. To observe that he is still read in the graduate schools may, unhappily, be but a confirmation of this fact. When a writer is read only by those who are professionally obliged to read him it can scarcely be said that he is a living force. However thorough and reverent an embalming may be, it seldom results in resurrection.

When the vast morgue of history has received another guest, an inquest is in order. What did the man die of? And what had he lived on? Looking back on Carlyle today we see in him much to annoy us and even more that leaves us cold. He was as much of a windbag as any of the liberals whom he mocked. He was not a great philosopher, nor can one regard what he did to English prose with much enthusiasm. If all his writings have their good moments, like Wagner's operas they have their bad half-hours. Why read his *French Revolution* or his *Frederick the Great?* As historiography they have been superseded; as literature they are affected, messy, and monotonous. A historian who writes at length must have a style that is endurable at length. Gibbon can be taken in long draughts like beer; Carlyle is a stiff whiskey of an unreliable brand.

As for what Carlyle says, there is, no doubt, too much dangerous nonsense about it, and we are not today in a frame of mind to stand dangerous nonsense directed against the Negroes, the Jews, the French or the common people. We are not in a frame of mind to listen to praise of Bismarck, Frederick the Great, and the Germans — whom Carlyle called "the First Nation of the Universe." Nor is Carlyle much more convincing, it may be felt, in the gentler mood of *Past and Present.* The remedies he there prescribes — such as silence, prayer, obedience, and emigration — sound more like a program for the disbanded Gestapo than for the United Nations. . . . In these days when it is comforting to find authors whom one may be excused for not reading, Carlyle will be among the first on our index. He is morally dangerous, aesthetically boring or repellent, and personally a neurotic whose psychoses are too evident and too simple to interest a public glutted with the most refined insanities. Why, it might be asked, if we condemn Ezra Pound and Charles Maur-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ras and Knut Hamsun living, ought we to praise Carlyle dead?

Germany has offended. But I believe there is another Germany. Carlyle has offended. But I believe there is another Carlyle. There is the Carlyle whom Friedrich Engels praised and translated, the Carlyle to whom Dickens dedicated *Hard Times* and Ruskin *Munera Pulveris*, the Carlyle who in America stirred the very different hearts of Emerson and Whitman, the Carlyle who in England was still able at the end of the century to spur on the young Havelock Ellis and the younger Patrick Geddes. There is the Carlyle who, for all his provinciality, made his presence felt in Paris, Madrid, Rome, and Berlin for at least half a century (excluding the use of Carlyle by the Nazis and the fascists). This was a man who said things that needed to be said, though nobody was saying them. Here was a man who clung tenaciously to truths that were being denied or forgotten. Here was a man whose life was one long tempestuous voyage through the dangerous currents of a revolutionary age. Here was a man who questioned not only the respectable ideas of the time, as every critic is expected to do as part of his regular routine, but also the most "advanced" ideas of the time. This takes courage.

The world, then as now, had many doctors. Then as now there were the advocates of normalcy, dominated by the fear of a red menace from abroad. Then as now there were the starry-eyed radicals who saw a democratic future arising from education and the ballot-box and beautiful shared experiences. Carlyle began by repudiating the status quo. After some traffic with idealistic socialism, he repudiated that also. Thereafter his task was to work out a scheme of things that would be as "realistic" as reaction and as noble as radicalism. Is not this still our task? Carlyle, it has to be admitted, did not altogether succeed in his attempt. He was sometimes content to parade his "realism" — as, say, Lawrence Dennis or James Burnham do today — and let the nobility slide. Carlyle did not have the answers. He had only the questions.

"He who asks the questions," says Oscar Wilde, another forgotten genius, "is never the one who answers them." This is not to lessen the importance of questioning. It takes the genius of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Carlyle or a Wilde to ask the right question at the right time with the right emphasis. Our tendency to prefer the genius with the answers is due to our superstitious reverence for dogma. Where today are the dogmas, the right answers, of the past? Some of them, no doubt, may be working well and according to plan. More are forgotten or in abeyance or in violent dispute. Our greatest teachers are not those who gave us doctrines or systems of metaphysics. They are the interrogators and the protesters and conundrum makers — from Confucius to Jesus, and from Voltaire to Nietzsche — whom we, with our respect for dogma, reward by crucifixion or — which in the long run is less flattering — by slander. The word for such a teacher is Paradoxical, Not Profound, or Confused. Carlyle belongs here.

Such teachers are notoriously Inconsistent. Like Whitman they contradict themselves and they don't care. Admittedly this is very naughty of them. What we need to remark, however, is the cause of their contradictiousness. It is their empiricism, their closeness to experience, their pre-occupation with what actually happens. Doubtless a thinker is not entitled to be contradictory merely because he knows that nature and experience are so. One need not make a positive merit of our teachers' contradictions. Yet one must understand them not as logical flaws but as sometimes legitimate products of an ironic and poetic rather than a logical awareness.

"I have solved the riddle of Truth," says Wilde. "A Truth in art is that whose contradictory is also true." A fantastic statement, enough to make any philosopher's blood boil. The philosopher — as such — has no sense of humor, therefore no sense of irony, therefore no sense of life. Carlyle was no philosopher. His closeness to concrete fact was not that of Bacon. It was that of Blake. He is to be judged by his struggles, his *obiter dicta*, his insights and hunches, and not by his metaphysic (which is chiefly half-understood jargon from Kant and Fichte). Carlyle appealed to many different people. What they found in him was the same thing: closeness to experience. Carlyle objected to poverty and to exploitation for the same reason: they limit experience. Through them man ceases to be an organic experiencer. He becomes a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

machine. What appealed to Engels in Carlyle was the passionate accuracy of his descriptions of the poor. What appealed to Ruskin was the passionate accuracy of his descriptions of the rich. In the face of the generalizing, sterilizing, mechanizing liberalism of the Benthamites, Carlyle spoke out for the human element, and became the inspirer of Dickens. When the first Labor Members of Parliament were asked about their teachers most of them named John Ruskin, who would never have been a social thinker at all but for Carlyle, and who arrived at few social conclusions that were not already his master's. The first great Labor leader in the British parliament, Keir Hardie, regarded Carlyle as an ally.

II

In my book *A Century of Hero-Worship* I elaborated in some detail the *pro* and the *con* of Carlyle's problematic mind. While I spoke more frankly and therefore more harshly of his shortcomings than most of his critics have done, I claimed that there is a large positive element in him and that, specifically, his doctrine of hero-worship should not be lightly dismissed as Bonapartism or proto-Hitlerism. The shower of protest which this claim brought down on my head convinces me that the death and embalmment of Carlyle are premature. The things he said are very much alive. And personally I would go into the lobby with Carlyle rather than with his opponents.

The great question is whether democracy is *in every respect* anti-aristocratic. Undoubtedly the democratic tradition has been a long struggle against the yet older aristocratic tradition. The question is whether the older tradition has to be scrapped *in toto*. Undoubtedly also there are democratic thinkers who are completely anti-aristocratic and who can therefore claim to be more completely democratic than anyone else. I refer to the anarchists. If anarchy alone is pure democracy then the rest of us clearly are impure democrats. So soon as we have government at all, some would say, so soon as government is merely representative and not inclusive of the whole populace, others would add, democracy is impure or non-existent. So soon, therefore, as we reject anarchy or the governmental democracy of very small

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

areas, we commit ourselves to government by leaders, and finding the best leaders becomes a prime task, as we all acknowledge at every election.

I do not disagree with those who say that democracy means bringing more and more people into political life, and vesting more and more power in them. Respect for the average citizen is so fundamental a necessity that I all along took it for granted. Nor do I believe in elites as usually defined. T. S. Eliot's "Towards a Definition of Culture" is a defense of elites. Having been born and bred in the relatively aristocratic society which Eliot has adopted I have fewer illusions about its nature. The hereditary elites of the old tradition are as unconvincing as the eugenically-bred elites of which Nietzsche and Shaw and Wells have dreamed. The idea of a separate caste of men believed to be deeply if not biologically different from others may have all kinds of things to be said for it. But etymology, logic, and history prevent us from calling it democratic.

If believers in leadership have often been prepared to give up democracy, believers in democracy have been unsatisfactory in their dealings with the problem of leadership. In actual affairs — in the army or in high schools — much is said about leadership, but most often it is all taken to be claptrap, which it may very well be. Where then are we to look for serious ideas about democratic leadership? Not, I think, to those like Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler whose conception of democracy is — shall we say? — equivocal. Not to official pronouncements of educators who wish their boys "some day to be manager of that concern." Not to Sidney Hook's *The Hero in History* which demolishes the opposition without, so far as I can see, setting up anything positive on our side. My belief is that at this point we might do worse than learn from such men as Carlyle and Nietzsche.

There is a second possibility, if Carlyle and Nietzsche are dead and beyond recall. Our democratic tradition, if we are prepared to go back beyond 1930, contains much advice on the subject. Some of it is what they now call "Stalinist" — which includes things that Ruskin and Shaw wrote before Stalin was heard of. Since, however, Ruskin and Shaw are writers whom people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

condemn but do not read, let me mention a name held higher in esteem: that of William James. James's essay "The Social Value of the College Bred" puts forward the very aristocratic democracy which I have done no more than confirm. There are aristocratic democrats more politically minded than James — such as John Stuart Mill, who was inclined to favor giving more votes to the educated than to the uneducated. Within the ranks of professional politicians there is one of the founders of democracy, Thomas Jefferson, who wrote to Adams in 1813: "For I agree . . . that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents. . . . The natural aristocracy I consider as the most precious gift of nature, for the instruction, the trusts, and government of society. . . ."

I agree. There are superior people. Sometimes they are "universal geniuses," superior in many directions, like Jefferson himself. More often they are superior only in certain isolable respects. Such superiority is denied only by those, one would imagine, who encourage the common man to believe himself a better scientist than Einstein. To acknowledge it is not to question the concrete meaning which the democratic idea of equality, as long ago defined by Locke, can have — such as equality before the law. Superior people are not a caste. They are not another brand of bread; they are the leaven in the loaf. When we hear of superior people we too often think of popes, pundits, and tyrants, who are seldom superior people by any intelligent criterion. Or we think of scientists and professors as William Morris did when he too glibly remarked: "Fancy a Carlylean aristocracy of talent: the country under the benevolent rule of Senior Wranglers and LL.D.'s!" Carlyle has certainly no respect for wranglers, senior or junior. These are not fairly chosen examples of superior people. We had much better think of Lincoln or Lenin. Like Jesus, these two more recent revolutionaries make it clear to us that the superior man may possess the common touch (which, perhaps, is as uncommon as common sense).

One of my critics, Kenneth Burke, insisted that my modified hero-worship is only the careerism which I had set out to condemn — the over-stimulated ambition of Samuel Smiles's *Self-*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Help. I had used the phrase: "Help the best men to the front," which sounds rotarian. But surely Mr. Burke should have known that there are other fronts besides shop fronts and that there are other kinds of success besides money-making. Mr. Burke writes: "Is it not precisely the inducement to individual ambition that has led to the pushing, elbowing, and scramble characteristic of democracy, even inciting men to strive after improvement of their social status?" Mr. Burke must be a bit of a rotarian himself. Personally I would not take so rotarian a view of the "careers" which are to be opened to talent. Why are "pushing, elbowing, and scramble" thought peculiarly characteristic of democracy? They were common enough in the eighteenth century. They are the very stuff of fascist society. . . . Another critic associates "careers open to talent" with the inventor of the phrase, Napoleon, and with a modern exploiter of it, Hitler. But Napoleon and Hitler had many excellent slogans (what could be better than the Nazi slogan Bread and Freedom?) by which they meant a few wicked things. We want the excellence without the wickedness.

"Careers open to talent," when they come into their own, will not mean careers open to careerists. They will mean that the millions of talents now crushed and frustrated by poverty, war, fear, and obscurantism will be permitted and assisted to flower. Talents are needed (*pace* Mr. Burke) outside politics and business. They are needed in the arts and sciences. They are needed everywhere. William James said: "Our democratic problem thus is statable in ultra-simple terms: Who are the kind of men from whom our majorities shall take their cue?" Carlyle said: "All that Democracy ever meant lies there: the attainment of a truer and truer Aristocracy or Government of the Best." This is not, of course, *all* that democracy ever meant. If I may quote myself: "Aristocracy is *one* of the goals of democracy."

It is not the only goal. As usual, Carlyle was partly wrong, and irritatingly wrong. What we are less willing to admit is that he was partly right, and much more irritatingly right, since he threatens some of our most treasured illusions about human nature and the common man. His death is premature.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Biography

Don Gordon

The mother and the father in procession
led the child to the first sea:

fear stumbled through the new Sunday
world; teeth followed him, and voices
with a vile purpose;

the dangerous scenery fell in his eyes
with the foam, the sea was after him.

The young man walked in doubt
on the mainland's tawny crust,

or on the island shore between
the coral and the leaves of the
sea-grape;

he made love in the sad light of
the beach towns, in the shelter
of sea-blasted cliffs;

he met himself on the gray coast;
he had nothing to say among the
torn paper; miles under his feet
crackled the blue-dark shells.

© DON GORDON is a frequent contributor of poetry to THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. His poems have appeared in *The New Republic*, *Poetry*, and *The Saturday Review of Literature*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The beat of a central heart, undiscovered,
was more even than his own.

He heard noise without sense, he saw
motion without direction.

He found in the seascapes, half-drowned
by sympathetic tides, a permanent
and last disorder.

The man and the woman moved on the western
edge in a year of war.

The litter on the beach defined their age:
over the glass and the halves of fruit
floated ironically the life preservers;

in the sand, driftwood, or the polished
bones of their friends.

The sea had no anger, no uncertainties;
its wild hours were law.

The child brought to it his bundle of
fear, the youth his disorder, the man
imposed his war.

The three figures cast an equal shade:
the tides of destruction ran without
moons, within them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Henry Adams and the Critics

Max I. Baym

HENRY ADAMS himself started the legend of his failure. On close inspection, the actual references to it in his autobiography are not so many as they at first appear to be. The reason for this is that these few allusions to his failure are frequently expressed in a context of Pascalian fatality, touched with lyricism. In the sombreness of his thought even his successes look like failures.

Let us open the *Education* and read — not forgetting that throughout Adams is a prose master consciously elaborating a stylistic pattern. The very first page strikes the note of a man who feels out of joint with the environment into which he has been thrown. Says Adams of himself: "Had he been born in Jerusalem under the shadow of the Temple and circumcised in the Synagogue by his uncle the high priest, under the name of Israel Cohen, he would scarcely have been more heavily handicapped in the races of the coming century. . . ."

Early in life, he saw himself as one of "a million young men planted in the mud of a lawless world." When secretary to his father in England, he met Milnes, who "was always unearthing new coins and trying to give them currency. He had unearthed Henry Adams who knew himself to be worthless and not current."

He found himself constantly "tossed between the horns of successive dilemmas." While "his identity, if one could call a bundle of disconnected memories an identity, seemed to remain," his life was periodically "broken into separate pieces; he was a spider and had to spin a new web in some new places with a new attachment."

© MAX I. BAYM has received permission from the Council of the Massachusetts Historical Society to incorporate the marginalia of Henry Adams in two books on which he has been working simultaneously for some time: *Adams' Orientation in Philosophy and Science* and *The Rôle of French Literature in Adams' Work.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Somewhere Emerson makes the point that sooner or later a man must choose between rest and truth. And, according to Adams, "Nothing is easier, if a man wants it, than rest, profound as the grave." Taking, perhaps, Vigny's dictum, "*Seul le silence est grand*," as a motto, he lost himself in "the Pursuit of Ignorance in Silence—*futilitarian* silence." With a self-directed satiric touch, he tells us of his days at Harvard College, when he shed his lifeblood for the sublime truths of Sac and Soc:

Hic Jacet
Homunculus Scriptor.
Doctor Barbaricus
Henricus Adams
Adae Filius Et Evae
Primo Explicuit
Socnam

As the nineteenth century was about to end, science itself contributed to his design of failure, and warned him to begin again from the beginning. Art offered no more comfort, for "he knew that his artistic standard was the illusion of his own mind." Here, one is reminded of Schopenhauer's "*Die Welt ist meine Vorstellung.*"

Finally, thrown into "Hamlet's Shakesperean silence" by the death of Hay, it pleased Adams to see himself as "an ignorant old man who felt no motive for trying to escape, seeing that the only escape lay in the form of *vis a tergo* commonly called Death."

Here then, in these quotations, we have the source of the legend of Adams' so-called failure. However, the critics who have used this source for their further elaboration of Henry Adams' lack of success, have ignored those passages in the *Education* which actually contradict and cancel the notion of failure. Indeed, very often the contradiction of failure will be found in the same passage, side by side with the affirmation of it.

II

Even a superficial analysis reveals Henry Adams as an individual who, given his background and tradition, was bound to develop a romantic personality-image of himself as the *heroic failure*, or the *failure as hero*. As we shall presently show, this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

purely artistic concept was mistaken by some people for autobiographical truth.

In a letter written to Waldo Frank on December 9, 1919, Amy Lowell said: "I wish you had known him [Adams] as I did. It was a lesson in what not to make of your life, as he recognized himself, poor old fellow, recognized to the extent of pen and paper but never to any further extent. . . . He could not transcend his blood, and that again was probably not his fault; but it was not an inspiring spectacle in the life, however it may be in the book."

"Recognized to the extent of pen and paper," indeed! But what did she make of page 316 of the *Education*, where Adams distinctly says that "he had enjoyed his life amazingly, and (what is more) would not have exchanged it for any other that came in his way; he was, or thought he was, perfectly satisfied with it"? He did confess in one of his letters: "I am ashamed to seem restless. It is ludicrous to play Ulysses. There is not in this wide continent of respectable mediocrity a greasier citizen, or one more contented in his oily ooze, than myself." And did Miss Lowell reach page 451 of Adams' *Education*, where he asserts that "No one means all that he says, and yet very few say all they mean, for words are slippery and thought is viscous"?

Parrington, in his *Main Currents of American Thought*, followed the work and thought of Henry Adams very acutely. Mr. Parrington's wisdom, coupled with his amazing learning, prevented him from misunderstanding the meaning of Adams' alleged failure to the extent that Amy Lowell did. Yet he too seemed to dwell on his failure. Referring to the period when Adams was engaged in writing his *Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres*, Professor Parrington says: "Thus at last, in another land and at a remote age, Henry Adams found the clue that explained for him his own failure and the source of the dissatisfactions that had tracked him doggedly through his far wanderings." Dr. Parrington charges Adams with a want of substantial realism in dealing with political corruption (as instanced in the novel *Democracy*), because of his "curious failure to take into account the economic springs of action." It was this want of realism (if we

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

follow Parrington correctly) that was to prevent Adams from feeling at home in the new world of the Gilded Age, or from embracing a new view of society — socialism. That Henry Adams should, in consequence, have regarded himself as a misfit, or as a failure, was inevitable.

Professor Carl Becker, like Amy Lowell, takes Adams' alleged failure seriously. Says Dr. Becker: "The *Education* is in fact the record, tragic and pathetic underneath its genial irony, of the defeat of fine aspirations and laudable ambitions. It is the story of a life which the man himself, in his old age, looked back upon as a broken arch." Students of literary history recognize in the broken arch an image closely associated with the *broken column* and *broken stone*, two distinctly romantic images. While Becker admits that "No sane man would call it [Adams' career] a failure," he nevertheless argues: "The chief question which the *Education* presents to the critic is therefore this: why did Henry Adams look back upon his life, which to other men was so enviable in itself and so notable in its achievements, as a failure?"

Dr. Becker finds the answer to this question in Adams' own words: "To be educated is to be able to identify oneself and one's work with the main stream or tendency of one's time . . . is to possess a philosophy which will solve the mystery of life." Naturally, Adams failed in getting the sort of education which would provide him with such a philosophy; but who, between Plato and Einstein, hasn't failed in that sense? Professor Becker comes, perhaps, nearer the mark when he suggests that Adams' chief reason for discontent, and hence his sense of failure, was that he had never been able to impress himself powerfully upon his time. Not to make a dent in the shell of destiny — this was to be a failure. Towards the end of his article, Dr. Becker tells us that "it is not likely that many readers will see the tragedy of a failure that looks like success." To elucidate or to resolve this paradox is precisely what constitutes our problem.

Unlike Amy Lowell, Parrington, and Becker, Paul Elmer More doesn't actually use the word "failure" to stamp or stigmatize Adams' career, but several of his assertions imply such an idea. "Adams ends his career," says Mr. More, "in sentimental

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nihilism. . . . He could not rest easy in negation, yet he could find no positive faith to take its place." From the tenor of Dr. More's essay, it is quite apparent that what Mr. Adams badly needed was a strong application of the inner check. . . .

A like attitude is found among such critics as Fernand Baldensperger, Granville Hicks, Edgar Johnson, and Ferner Nuhn. The first believes that Adams was very sincere in his complaint "d'être venu trop tard dans un monde trop vieux." The second, deriving a good deal from Parrington, and also taking Adams seriously, maintains that the latter "overstated his despair." Actually (we submit), Adams' despair was of a purely *literary* nature, and as such it was no more overstated than was that of Alfred de Musset in *Les Nuits*, of Lamartine in *Le Lac*, of Victor Hugo in his *Tristesse d'Olympio*, or of any of the English romantics.

Mr. Johnson argues that Henry Adams was "the last liberal," and since *liberalism* (which he does not bother to define) was doomed to failure because of a rising proletarian radicalism, Mr. Adams was doomed to failure. What stood in his way, according to Mr. Johnson, was skepticism, "the last fruit of the liberal tradition." If we are to take Montaigne as one of the great sources of modern skepticism, it is hard to see where it (skepticism) is the last fruit of the liberal tradition. We agree heartily with Mr. Johnson — though others besides him have expressed that idea before — that "Adams is a symbolic man," that "his life recapitulates the life of a class and of a culture," perhaps even that "*The Education* is the swan song of a political democracy and capitalist materialism." He might have added, as a reading of E. A. Robinson's *Demos and Dionysus* would help make clear, that it is also the swan song of many other things, including perhaps the materialistic conception of history.

As for Nuhn, although he is aware that Adams could make anything, from Harvard College to God, look like failure, that awareness gives way to an acceptance of the failure as fact. Adams was a divided man. In proof of this Mr. Nuhn points to his "parade of erudition, irony, derision, self-mockery, occasional pathos." But these very elements are what distinguish many out-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

standing poets both ancient and modern. What would the word failure mean in conjunction with a man like Heine?

III

It was Henry Adams himself who was responsible for the notion, later elaborated and expanded by others, that he was a failure. The theme song of the whole *Education* is his own so-called failure. I say "so-called" because the conception of himself as a failure comported with his idea (itself a composite of ideas) that if there is one thing that makes the individual life worthy of notice at all, it is the heroic element in it, which, as in a tragedy, carries with it the notion of doom.

In a letter addressed to John Hay, under date of January 23, 1883, he wrote: "Trollope has amused me for two evenings. I am clear that you should write autobiography. I mean to do mine. After seeing how coolly and neatly a man like Trollope can destroy the last vestige of heroism in his own life, I object to allowing mine to be murdered by any one except myself." Here, then, we have from his own pen a hint at the heroic element of which mention was made a moment ago.

Adams saw his own mind, as well as all human thought, "caught and whirled about in the vortex of infinite forces." He saw himself almost in the manner of Alfred de Musset — romantically enough — as "drifting in the dead-water of the fin de siècle," as "a stranded Tannhäuser in his household at St. Germain in the late '90's, slowly beginning to feel at home in France."

If we follow the marche-route of our stranded Tannhäuser, we find that it reached from the winged meliorism of Hugo and Shelley, through Leopardi, Von Hartmann, Schopenhauer, benevolent evolutionism, the symbolic languor of "The Lotus Eaters," to Walter Pater, who in the unforgettable Conclusion to his *The Renaissance* quotes Novalis: "*Philosophiren ist dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren.*" We see that our Tannhäuser's quest led him over the full length of the way of romanticism, right into the whirlpool of *Energy*.

"How shall we pass most swiftly," asked Pater, "from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest num-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ber of vital forces unite in their purest energy?" The senses are challenged to become and stay electric with a "gemlike flame." Success is equated with sustained ecstasy. Science itself is enlisted for the purpose of maintaining this ecstasy. "While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend."

But in the heart of all this was "some tragic dividing of forces" — failure. Adams, too, could not "on this short day of frost and sun . . . sleep before evening," nor would he acquiesce "in a facile orthodoxy of Comte, or of Hegel. . . ." His Ego would have its full play in a field of running down energies — a perfectly romantic picture of heroic failure. This *mal romantique* is very often disguised in his quest for a science of history: in reality science is for him another form of aesthetic contemplation; his religious skepticism is another facet of his romantic disease.

IV

Janko Lavrin says, rightly I believe, that "we are all romantics whatever else we may be besides." We are all dissatisfied with the world as it is; we all have an innate craving for beauty and perfection; we are all subject to the conflict between desire and restraint. With the artist this conflict gives rise to creative form.

It is interesting to note that Adams answers to — in fact, combines — every one of the ten romantic types enumerated by Janko Lavrin in his *Romantic Types:*

1. The sentimental-contemplative, or "dreamy type"
2. The fantastic-imaginative type
3. The exotic type
4. The mystical-philosophic type
5. The emotional-Dionysian
6. The analytical solipsistic type
7. The militant rebel; the "Promethean" and Satanic type
8. The "Realistic" romanticist
9. The romantic aesthete
10. The social-humanitarian and Utopian type

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Now it is important to observe that one image which emerges from the conflict between desire and restraint and crystallizes into a personality-image, especially in one who combines the Lavrin types, is that of the *heroic failure* or the *failure as hero.* (Byron, Keats, Shelley, Hugo.)

It is this image that Adams writes, so to speak, into his theory of history. In fact, his activity as an historian might be cited as the best exemplification of his romanticism. His conception of the catastrophic march of experience, with man's intermittent awareness of it, certainly derives in great measure from his personality-image. In this connection, Adams owed a great deal to Michelet, whom he read, pencil in hand.

The objection of the romanticists to the idea of purpose in history, as George Brandes has it, may be traced back to Herder. It is in the romantics that the link between a non-teleological conception of history and the conception of the intensified tragic-hero image may be observed; for to them, purposelessness is another name for genius. To be sure, what *would* differentiate Adams from the older romantics would be his interest in experimental methods in science (though, of course, there is Goethe); but here, too, he sought the results which bolstered up his idea of dissipation of energy — of failure.

It must be remembered, too, that Henry Adams was nurtured on the romantic personality-image in his grandfather's library; for John Quincy Adams not only possessed a copy of *The Sorrows of Werther*, but had made his own translation of it. Coleridge has well observed that in all ages there have been men who proposed their own nature as a problem, and devoted their attempts to its solution. *The Education of Henry Adams* becomes more intelligible in the light of *The Confessions* of Jean Jacques and *The Sorrows of Werther.*

It is of more than parenthetic interest to cast a glance at a MS note in Adams' copy of *Les Confessions de Saint Augustin.* On page 361 Adams read: "*Ergo animus ad habendum seipsum angustus est*"; next to it he questioned: "Does this mean: 'The mind is too narrow to contain itself'?" Again, on page 591 he read, "*Vous êtes vous-même votre repos*" for "*Tua quies tu ipse*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

es" and he penciled this query: "Or is it: — *votre repos, c'est vous?*" Note the emphasis thrown on the all-containing Ego. We are back in the lap of Novalis, with whom everything tended inwards; whose soul (*Gemuth*) is the centripetal force of the spiritual life. So many of the romantics thought that "*Leben ist eine Krankheit des Geistes*" and that the "World-spirit in living individuals attains self-consciousness." Adams' thought ran in that channel.

John Cournos has compared Adams, in certain external aspects, with Amiel. Amiel, too, was regarded as a "failure" by his friends, and his posthumous *Journal Intime* seemed to confirm their belief. For both Adams and Amiel reality seemed to fall short of that ideal in which they preferred to luxuriate. Despair follows — despair both of the world and of oneself. Thus the failure-image comes into the foreground and itself usurps the place of the lost ideal — an image which hovers on the verge of a new synthesis (perhaps a return to God). The succession which Cournos indicates, while not as yet fully documented, seems none the less sound: namely, that Amiel (in some respects) had anticipated Adams, and that Adams, in his turn, had anticipated Oswald Spengler.

V

We are now ready for a revaluation of Adams' "failure." Henry Adams recapitulated on American soil the romantic tradition of Europe. This tradition included aesthetic pessimism, in which framework he built up a personality-image which he came to enjoy artistically. The image was that of the failure, the heroic failure. He came to enjoy the spectacle doubly: on the stage as an actor, from the wings as an onlooker who revels in the gaping audiences.

In the intensification of his Ego, Adams ran the gauntlet of romantic subjectivism: scientificism, sentimentalism, sensualism. Most frequently, the three make up the webwork of his literary fabric. Thus, *The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma*, most of his *Essays*, and his *History*, constitute his scientificism; his *Letters*, his two novels (*Esther* and *Democracy*), and his biography

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of George Cabot Lodge, comprise his sentimentalism; his poems and his book on Tahiti embody his sensualism; while his *Education* and his *Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres* (which, after all is said, constitute his greatest claim to fame) comprehend the three. One romantic by-product of such an amalgam is, of course, mysticism; and we do find its particular manifestation in his Brahma poem. Here he touches the American phase of romanticism: the transcendentalism of Emerson, Channing, Alcott.

Adams' failure was only a pen and paper failure. He wrote "a terribly ironic estimate of himself" because it pleased his artistic fancy to do so. Corresponding to Rousseau's chain of feelings reaching out for logical continuity in thought, we have in Adams a *chain of thoughts* reaching out for artistic cohesiveness in feelings expressed, precipitating an emotional amalgam to give them unity. In both, the aesthetic bias is at work in the creation of a personality-image.

Using Professor Parrington's words, we ask: What did Adams find "in another land and at a remote age"? Did he find there "the clue that explained for him his own failure and the source of the dissatisfactions that had tracked him doggedly through his far wanderings"? Or did he rather find there (in the Middle Ages and Chartres) what all romantics (including Ruskin, William Morris, Pater and others after them) have found there — namely, an escape from the onslaught of an iron-clad, machine-cluttered, money-changing world? Discontent? Adams manifests the romantic, even the "divine" discontent; for no person with creative imagination has ever been satisfied that his efforts have resulted in works which, in their impact with society, have been commensurate with his ability or aspirations. The product always falls pathetically short of the heroic image which projects it. In the light of this interpretation, the "*ombre de pose romantique*," denied to Adams, becomes his constant abode.

Parenthetically, we may mention here Garnet Smith, who refers to Henry Adams as a philosophic Sindbad who had been irresistibly drawn to shipwreck on the reefs of force. "It did not occur to him," says Mr. Smith, "that Force might be no more than a mathematical fiction, a sham entity." Anyone who has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been hit by a stone or measured his full length against the sidewalk need not be told that force is hardly a fiction. But the *concept* of force imaginatively elaborated may be a fiction, and, if so, Adams courted this fiction as something worthy of measuring his own Ego against.

"They all want to play Hamlet," Maxwell Bodenheim once said in a sardonic moment. Accordingly we turn at last to the prototype of all romantic heroes who have lived and died in the shadow of the failure-image — to Hamlet, who revealed his high-mindedness in daring to explore his own nature; in serving, if you will, as a model for all future introspective literary heroes. But, aware of his tendency toward self-analysis, he himself is inclined to feel that his suspicions are the result of too much introspection. In short, he accounts his introspection as a kind of disease to which he must yield withal. This was his fate, which he chose in part not without deliberation.

Adams, too, accounted introspection a disease — in spite of his protestations that he "had no need to learn from Hamlet the fatal effect of the pale cast of thought on enterprises great or small." "He knew no tragedy so heartrending as introspection, and the more, because — as Mephistopheles said of Marguerite — he was not the first." Adams here identifies himself with the whole Hamletesque tradition. He reminds us that "Nearly all the highest intelligence known to history had drowned itself in the reflection of its own thought. . . ."

Adams' sense of success beneath seeming failure rings in his proud though characteristically ironic statement: "I've managed to drag on a degraded existence for the last thirty years without an office or an honor to my family-back . . . all the better for the freedom. We have outlived dynasties and are still on top, while a thousand Congressmen, Cabinets, and Presidents have vanished." Adams' failure-image was in full consonance with the knowledge that "The only competition worthy of a wise man is with himself."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Renan on War and Peace

Aristide Mian

SEVENTY-FIVE years ago, Ernest Renan, the French scholar and historian, set forth with great lucidity the problems which confront us today — the calamities which have befallen us and the conditions necessary to avoid their recurrence.

Renan gave Germany warning that to introduce racism and ethnography into politics "would cause the struggle between peoples to degenerate into wars of extermination . . . 'zoological' wars, which would be . . . the end of this fecund mixture composed of those numerous elements, all of which are necessary in what we call humanity."

He also warned her that by abandoning herself to the warriors and statesmen of Prussia, she had engaged herself in a way which would lead her where she does not want to go, and would become involved in a series of situations from which she would not be able to disentangle herself. He pointed to the growing consciousness of Slavism in opposition to Germanism — opposition which would bring on frightful struggles. On the same occasion he showed certain traits of the German character which were there before Nazism and Hitler, and will probably still be there after them.

He also made the clearest exposition of the conditions necessary to bring about the end of the scourge of war — namely, that to the principle of Nationality should be added its corrective: the principle of Federation. And he predicted, as it sadly came true: "A tribunal without an army to enforce its decisions is a chimera; nobody will obey it."

He said also: "The commonly held opinion that peace will be assured only when one nation will have incontestable superiority over all others is the opposite of truth. Any nation exercising he-

© ARISTIDE MIAN, French sculptor, who has been living in the United States since 1939, has made an intensive study of Ernest Renan's works.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gemony prepares by that fact her ruin by bringing the coalition of all against her."

In the following excerpts, I have not tried to condense Renan's thoughts; I have simply collected from *La Réforme Intellectuelle et Morale* (which includes two letters to Strauss, the German historian) a few passages where I found a felicitous expression of the problems which affect us, the solution of which is going to shape the world. This work was written during and immediately after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

Today, when Europe is a shambles and Germany a pile of rubble, we can meditate on the abyss which separates wisdom and folly.

In 1871 Ernest Renan wrote: "It had been the dream of my life to work, in the small measure of my ability, for the intellectual, moral and political alliance between France and Germany — an alliance which, with the adherence of England, would constitute a force capable of governing the world — meaning by that to direct it in the way of a liberal civilization. . . . My dream, I admit, is destroyed forever. An abyss has been dug between France and Germany, and centuries will not fill it. The violence done to Alsace and Lorraine will remain for a long time an open wound. The so-called *guaranty of peace*, dreamed by the journalists and statesmen of Germany, is a *guaranty of endless wars*."

In Renan's correspondence with A. M. Strauss, in September 1871:

> Our *politique* is the *politique* of the right of nations; yours is the *politique* of races; we believe that ours is better. The too marked division of humanity into races rests on a scientific error, since few countries possess a pure race, and can only lead to wars of extermination. . . . You have raised in the world the flag of ethnographic *politique*, archaeological *politique*, in place of the liberal *politique*. This *politique* will be fatal to you. . . . Comparative philology, which you have created and which, wrongly, you have carried into the political field, will turn against you. The Slavs are getting enthusiastic about it; every Slav school teacher is for you an enemy, a termite who is ruining your house. How can you believe that the Slavs will not do to you what you are doing to others? — they who follow you step by step. Every affirmation of Germanism is an affirmation of Slavism. Every movement

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of concentration on your part is a movement which "precipitates" the Slav, makes him "be" separately. A glance at Austrian affairs shows that clearly. In fifty years the Slav will know that it is you who have made his name synonymous with "Slave"; he will see this long historical exploitation of his race by yours, and the number of Slavs is twice your number. . . . How much better it would have been to reserve for that day an appeal to reason, to morality, to friendships of principle! Think of what will weigh in the balance on that day when Bohemia, Moravia, Croatia, Servia, all the Slav populations of the Ottoman Empire, destined surely for freedom, races still heroic, military, who need only to be commanded, will group themselves around this great Muscovite conglomerate, which already encloses in a Slavic group so many diverse elements, and which seems to be the predestined core of the future Slavic unity. In the same way Macedonia, hardly Greek; Piedmont, hardly Italian; Prussia, hardly German; have been the center of the formation of Greek unity, Italian unity, German unity. . . . Our century is the century of the triumph of the serf over his master. The Slav has been, and in some ways still is, your serf.

On the day of the Slavic conquest, our position will be better than yours, as Athens under the Roman empire had still a brilliant role to play, while Sparta had none.

Be wary of ethnography; at least, do not apply it too much to politics. Because of a German etymology, you take for Germany some village of Lorraine. The names of Vienna (Vindobona), of Worms (Borbitomagus), of Mainz (Mogontiacum), are Gallic. We shall never claim those cities, but if some day the Slavs claim Prussia proper, Pomerania, Silesia, Berlin — because all those names are Slavic — if they do on the Elba and the Oder what you have done on the Moselle — if they point out on the map the Obotrite or Velatable villages — what will you have to say? Nation is not synonymous with race. Little Switzerland, so strongly built, has three languages, three or four races, two religions. A nation is a great secular association (not an eternal one) among congeneric provinces forming a core, and around which other provinces, united by common interests, or by ancient and accepted facts which have become interests, group themselves. England, the most perfect of nations, is the most mixed, from an ethnographic and historical point of view. Pure Britons, Romanized Britons, Irish, Caledonians, Anglo-Saxons, Danes, pure Normans, French Normans — everything has gone into it.

And I dare to say that no nation will have to suffer as much from this wrong way of reasoning as Germany. . . . Beware! in this century of the resurrection of the dead, strange things could happen. Bohemia, which was half digested by Germanism, escapes you, like a prey already swallowed by a python, who resuscitates in the esophagus of the monster and makes desperate efforts to get out. I am willing to believe that the Slav consciousness is dead in Silesia, but you will not assimilate Posen. Those operations want to be carried out promptly, while the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

patient is asleep. If he awakes, you will not catch him again. . . .

War will be endless if one does not admit some prescriptions for the violences of the past. Without doubt Lorraine has been part of the Germanic empire; but Holland, Switzerland, Italy itself up to Beneventum, and, going back before the treaty of Verdun, the whole of France, including even Catalonia, have been part of it. Alsace is now Germanic in language and race, but, before being invaded by the German race, Alsace was a Celtic country, as was also a part of South Germany. We do not conclude from that that South Germany should be French — but let no one come to claim that, by ancient rights, Metz and Luxembourg should be German. Nobody could say where this archaeology should stop. Almost everywhere that the fiery patriots of Germany claim a Germanic right, we could claim a Celtic right. Anterior to the Germanic, and before the Celtic period, there were, it is said, the Allophyles, the Finns, the Lapps, and before the Lapps, there were the cavemen, and, before the cavemen, there were the orangoutangs. With this philosophy of history there is no legitimate right in the world but that of the orangoutangs, unjustly deposed by the perfidy of the civilized.

Let us not be so absolute. Beside the right of the dead, let us admit a small part of the right of the living.

Alsace is Germanic by race and language, but she does not want to be part of the German state; that settles the question. They speak of the right of France, of the right of Germany. Those abstractions impress us much less than the right of the Alsatians — living beings of flesh and blood — to obey only a power accepted by themselves.

In *La Guerre entre La France et L'Allemagne* (1870):

Some German naturalists, who have the pretentiousness to apply their science to politics, affirm, with a coolness that would like to look profound, that the laws of the destruction of races and the fight for life are found in history — that the stronger race necessarily drives out the weaker one, and that consequently the Germanic race, being stronger than the Latin and Slavic races, is bound to vanquish and subdue them. Let us waive this last pretension, though we could make many reservations. Let us not object to these transcendental materialists that Right, Justice, Morality — things which have no meaning in the animal kingdom — are laws of humanity. Minds so entirely emancipated from the old ideas would probably answer us with a smile. Let us make only one remark: animal species do not make coalitions among themselves. One has never seen two or three species, in danger of being destroyed, form a coalition against their common enemy; the beasts of the same land have amongst themselves neither alliances nor congress. The federative principle, guardian of justice, is the basis of humanity. In it is the guaranty of the right of all. There is no European people which should not bow to such a tribunal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How has such a frightful event as the one which will make of 1870 a year of terrible memory been possible? Because the various European nations are too independent of each other, and have above them neither Congress, Diet, nor Tribunal which would be superior to their national sovereignties. Such an establishment virtually exists, especially since 1814, and has frequently acted in Europe's collective name, weighting its resolutions with the menace of a coalition, but the central power has not been strong enough to prevent terrible wars. It must become so. The dreams of the Utopists of peace — a tribunal without an army to enforce its decisions — is a chimera; nobody will obey it. On the other hand, the opinion that peace will be assured only on the day when one nation will have incontestable superiority over all others is the opposite of truth. Any nation exercising hegemony prepares by that fact her ruin by bringing the coalition of all against her. Peace can be established and maintained only by the common interest of Europe, or, if you prefer, by the league of neutrals assuming the power to enforce sanctions. Justice between two contending parties has no chance of triumphing; but among ten contending parties, justice wins, because it is only justice which can offer a common basis of agreement, an understanding, a common ground. So the force capable of maintaining against the most powerful of the states a decision judged useful to the salvation of the European family resides uniquely in the power of intervention, of mediation, of coalition, of the various states. Let us hope that this power, taking more and more concrete and regular forms, will become in the future a real congress, periodic if not permanent, and will be the heart of the United States of Europe, bound between themselves by a federal pact. No nation will then have the right to call itself the "Great Nation," but it will be possible for any one to be a great nation, on condition that this title will not be self-given, but will come from the other nations. It will be for history to specify what each people will have done for humanity, and to point out those countries which, at certain epochs, may have had over others special kinds of superiority.

In *De la France:*

The situation would be simple if the nations of the old regime, once their old structure has fallen, would simply change to the American system. One could then rest in this republican philosophy of history according to which the American social type is the one of the future, and the one to which all countries will conform, sooner or later. But it is not so. The active part of the democratic party which is at work more or less in all European states has not for its ideal the American Republic. Except for a few theorists, the democratic party has socialistic tendencies which are the reverse of American ideas of property and liberty. Freedom of work, free competition, free use of property, freedom to enrich oneself according to one's capacity, are precisely what European

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

democracies do not want. Will a third social type be born of these tendencies — a condition by which the state would intervene in contracts, in industrial and commercial relationships, in the question of ownership? . . . From this arises a strange doubt, which in France reaches tragic proportions, and disturbs the lives of us all.

Again in *La Guerre entre La France et L'Allemagne:*

France, and, to some extent, England, have reached their goal. Prussia and Russia have not arrived at the moment at which one possesses what one has wanted, where one considers coldly that for which one has troubled the world, and sees that it is nothing, that all things here below are only an episode in an eternal dream, a ripple on the surface of an infinite which in turn produces us and engulfs us. These new and violent races of the north are much more naive; they are dupes of their desires; carried away by the goal they seek, they resemble the young man who imagines that when he has once attained the object of his passion, he will be fully happy. To this may be added one trait of character — a sentiment, which the sandy plains of north Germany seem always to have inspired — the sentiment of chaste Vandals confronted by the morals and luxury of the Roman Empire — a kind of Puritan fury, a jealousy and rage against the easier ways of those who enjoy life. This somber and fanatic humor still exists in our days. Such "melancholy spirits," as was said in the old days, believe themselves charged with avenging virtue, redressing the corrupted nations. To these exalted ones, the idea of the German Empire is not that of a limited nationality free within its borders, not meddling with the rest of the world; what they want is a universal action of the Germanic race, renewing and dominating Europe. It is a frenzy which is truly chimerical.

The greatest fault that the liberal school could commit in the midst of the horrors besieging us would be to despair. The future belongs to her. The war, object of future maledictions, was possible because people departed from the liberal maxims which are at the same time those of peace and the union of peoples.

In a letter to Strauss:

Since last year what always happens to those who preach moderation in times of crisis has happened to me. Events and majority opinion gave me the lie. Nevertheless, I cannot say that I am converted; let us wait ten or fifteen years. I am convinced that the enlightened part of Germany will see that when I was advising her to make moderate use of her victory, I was her best friend. I don't believe in the duration of things carried to extremes. I should be much surprised if so absolute a faith in the virtues of a race as that professed by M. de Bismarck and M. de Moltke does not meet with disappointment.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Germany must be on her guard lest, some day when men speak of the most glorious years of the Germanic race, they prefer to the period of her military might, marked, perhaps, by a moral and intellectual lowering, the first years of our century, when, vanquished, outwardly humiliated, she was creating for the world the highest revelation of reason that humanity had known until then.

In *La Guerre entre La France et L'Allemagne:*

All great military hegemonies — the Spanish one in the sixteenth century, the French one under Louis XIV, and that under Napoleon, have promptly ended in exhaustion. Prussia should beware. Her untempered politics can draw her into a series of complications from which she will not be able to extricate herself. A sharp eye might perhaps already see the shape of the knot of the future coalition. The wise friend of Prussia will tell her softly, not as a menace but as a warning: *Vae victoribus!*

In a letter to Strauss:

The European nations such as history has made them are the peers of a great senate in which each member is inviolable. Europe is a confederation of States united by the common idea of civilization. The individuality of each nation is doubtless constituted by its race, language, history, and religion, but also by something much more tangible, by the actual consent, by the will which the different provinces of a state have to live together.

In *La Part de la Famille et de l'Etat dans l'Education:*

In all things let us return to the traditions that an enlightened Christianity and a sane philosophy are teaching us. The world is kept upright by only a little virtue; ten just men often obtain forgiveness for a guilty society. . . . Egotism, avidity in the pursuit of riches and pleasures cannot build a firm foundation for society. . . . Each man in his place is the keeper of a tradition which is important for the continuation of the divine work here below. All of us are brothers in reason, brothers before duty, brothers before God. Absolute equality is not found in nature; there will always be individuals stronger, more beautiful, richer, more intelligent, more gifted, than others. It is before God and duty that equality is perfect. . . . There is no other greatness than the greatness of duty accomplished; there is also no other happiness.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The American Scholar Forum

THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

The Need for Religion and Its Truth

Raphael Demos

During the last fifty years and longer, our idealists and our men of good will — especially among the young — have devoted their energy to the task of social reform. How to improve our institutions or even radically to alter them, the defects of capitalism, the potentialities of socialism, the spread of democracy, the elimination of poverty and disease — these and similar questions have absorbed our attention and challenged our thinking. We have taken it for granted that our problems revolve primarily around the task of political, economic, and social organization. No one can rightly deny that many useful results have been obtained along these lines; yet reflective people are beginning to wonder whether the plan of the campaign has been adequately conceived, and whether we have not concentrated on tactical to the exclusion of strategic considerations.

The New Republic, in a thoughtful editorial entitled "Atomic and Human Energy" (August 27, 1945), discusses the risks to which the invention of the atomic bomb has exposed the entire human race. How safeguard ourselves from the tremendously destructive powers of the new weapon? The editorial suggests that merely to establish a world-organization is not enough; there would still be the possibility that the members would misuse the organization for inhumane and selfish purposes. It concludes that "the only sure safeguard against disaster lies not in control of the weapon, but in civilizing the human beings who may wish to use the weapon. . . . We must understand that both our fears and our hopes are centered not about the material forces of the universe, but about ourselves. The explosive energies of the human personality are far greater than those of the atom, and can have a more devastating effect if released in the wrong way. The material which is studied by the physicists is neutral and impersonal. What is done with it depends upon the nature of the persons under whose control it happens to fall."

This is a truly remarkable statement whose import extends much further than the limited question of how to handle the atomic bomb. Its significance lies in the discernment that the crucial problem is how to control human nature — a recognition all the more striking because it comes from *The New Republic*, a journal whose concern has been in the past with the reform of institutions rather than of persons. And this is precisely the point which I wish to stress in my own brief statement: no matter how radically we change our institutions for the better, no matter how sound our economic and political pattern, so long as human persons remain unreformed, the danger exists that the institutions will be abused and the results be evil. As long as human greed, jealousy, overweening ambition, the love of power, and other

RAPHAEL DEMOS, Alford professor of philosophy at Harvard University, is the author of *The Philosophy of Plato*. Professor Demos was a member of the committee that brought out the recent Harvard report on *General Education in a Free Society*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

predatory or merely undisciplined passions exist, there is the risk that the best of world-organizations may turn imperialistic, that the communistic state may become an instrument for private ambition and gain, that democracy or any ideal government may become an arena for the strife for power. I am not for one moment denying the need for improving systems and conditions; I am only saying that beyond institutions and social patterns there are the human sentiments which must be "civilized," too; that besides the outer man there is the problem of the inner man. No social utopia is soundly conceived which ignores the inner man and the perpetual conflict between passion and reason.

In his reference to the problem of civilizing the human being, the editor of *The New Republic* was — unconsciously no doubt — harking back to what old-fashioned Christianity called the human heart, the flesh, and the problem of human salvation. We have been brought to the very threshold of religion, for, as Mr. Whitehead has finely said, religion is what a man does with his own solitariness. Religion is the cleansing of the inner parts. The passions are explosive, volcanic, threatening to erupt and consume the best of institutions. They are essentially recalcitrant, never completely tamed; the will needs to be always alert, beginning its task anew every day. For that very reason, perhaps, we have preferred to turn our attention to the relatively easier, relatively more successful job of repairing our institutional edifice. Yet unless the passions are checked, the edifice may fall — a truth which religious insight has firmly grasped and proclaimed. All this, however, is not meant to deny that there is an interplay between the inner man and the outer man. External conditions and sound institutions help form the inner man, while, conversely, inner health flows outward into a sound society.

In our reaction to Puritanism, we have, most of us, become optimists, disciples of Rousseau, who maintained that human nature is intrinsically healthy and that all evils are due to outer circumstances, to evil institutions, and to ignorance. Improve the social structure, we have said, enlighten man, multiply schools, release man from the bondage of ignorance, and all will be well. We have assumed that there is a law of human progress, the train is on the move, and we are the passengers carried perforce to Utopia. Then came the shock of the two great wars, revealing unsuspected depths of barbarism, not only in our enemies but even in ourselves — in human nature as such. Our confidence in the powers of education has been based on the Socratic doctrine that men by nature love the good, and turn away from it only because of ignorance. But it does not seem true that to know the good is to do the good. Perhaps the Puritans had been right in thinking that there is something sinful in man. Consider the German people in the last fifty years. They had reached great heights of intellectual culture in the fields of music, of science, of mathematics and of philosophy. Yet their intellectual and artistic civilization failed wholly to overcome their condition of inner barbarism, of fanatical passion and of romantic hysteria. Thus the problem of human salvation is not solved by the enlightenment of the intellect; to make a man good, it is not enough to make him wise. There is the relatively separate task of dealing with the human will, of turning the will to good ends. The flower turns to the sun by nature; but the human will is free, and may or may not turn to the sun of the good.

In this connection let us consider the solution which *The New Republic* offers: "The science of human personality and of the society composed of human beings has lagged far behind the science of the physical universe. Religions, philosophies, ethical systems have all striven to make their contribution, but this contribution has been inadequate to the responsibilities which our one-sided knowledge has imposed upon us. It is high time for us to concentrate our attention and our ingenuity on achieving as penetrating, as cool and as competent a body of knowledge about how to choose our aims and how to effectuate them as we have hitherto devoted to discovering the secrets of matter." This solution seems to me both lame and wrong; but I have quoted it in full, because it is typical of the opinion of many educated and well-informed persons today. We have

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an unlimited confidence in the potentialities of the scientific method. Of course we are in duty bound to exhaust all the resources of human reason in trying to understand and to cope with human passions. But scientific method is only a partial expression of human reason; it is human reason applying itself to a special kind of thing. Science deals with what can be experimented with (although not exclusively so), with what can be measured, with what is pervasive and recurrent. But you cannot experiment with a human being — not with his attitudes and sentiments — you cannot measure his purposes; and a human being is unique. The field of material nature is relatively simple; the field of human nature is infinitely complex.

When I pass on to the proposed scientific study of human *aims*, I am totally at a loss as to what is meant. While I believe that problems of value are a subject-matter for rational inquiry (in the way, for example, in which they are dealt with in the Socratic dialogues), I fail to see how scientific methods can achieve anything for our knowledge of values. Here is a typical case. Some people maintain that pleasure is the good, others power, others life itself, others duty. In the name of all that is reasonable, how could a scientist using the methods of the laboratory settle which of these views is right? The scientific investigation may well show that one type of conduct ensures survival better than another, but what can the significance of that result be, when the value of survival is in question?

Supposing, however, we admit for the sake of argument that we can achieve an adequate scientific knowledge of human nature and of human values, how are we going to use it when we get it? Scientific knowledge enables us to control matter; as Bacon said, knowledge is power. But do we want power over human beings, even if science could give it to us? We *mould* material things into the pattern of human ends. But we do not *mould* human beings, and do not wish to do so. That way lies indoctrination, propaganda, the worst tyranny of all, because it is tyranny over the human mind.

The builder takes the clay and makes it into bricks; then he takes the bricks and arranges them into the shape of a house. At no time does the builder ask the clay and the bricks what *they* think about it. But in dealing with the client, the builder must consult the latter's wishes and obtain his consent. It is therefore highly misleading to use analogies from the manufacture of things, and even more from the production of works of fine art, for the purpose of illuminating the field of human relations. The sculptor moulds his clay; the teacher does not mould his pupil. The Socratic metaphor of the teacher as midwife to his pupils is eternally true. Otherwise, in the professed aim of doing good, we run the risk of doing fundamental evil by depriving the human being of its spiritual autonomy. Virtuous action is not something produced by conditions; it is the outcome of a personal decision. Else it is not virtuous.

After we have attained an understanding of human nature, whether by scientific or by other methods, we still have the problem as to how to lure the individual to the good. It is easy to see that implicit in the minds of those who expect great things from the application of scientific methods to the problems of man and society is the belief that human purposes are essentially good. Let us ascertain (they have thought) the proper ways for developing a sound personality. In short, let us find the right road, and we can trust the individual to proceed along that road. But, as I have urged, human purposes are not necessarily right; there is the basic task of transforming human purposes. Doubtless modern psychiatry has made great advances in the understanding of human personality and in the curing of human ills. But the human problem is also a moral problem; and the task of moral regeneration is not reducible to one of therapy — not even of spiritual therapy. Religion is not medicine. The individual must freely admit his guilt and must repent in order to be "saved." Thus, human salvation cannot be explained in terms of human nature solely; it entails the recognition of an extra-human and absolute law to which man owes absolute allegiance.

We are faced today with the dangerous trend toward *scientific imperialism;* I refer to the predatory tendency of science to invade the territory of all other agencies, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to its claim to rule over them all. Science is a wonderful instrument in its field; but its achievements do not render other agencies superfluous. Religion, too, tends to be imperialistic and monopolistic. Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and everything else will be added unto you." If this statement means that the attainment of the kingdom of heaven is indispensable for the attainment of the kingdom of the earth, I agree; but if it means that it is all-sufficient, I disagree. Social reform is a special problem to be tackled separately or at any rate in conjunction with the reform of the human heart. Mere piety does not ensure the elimination of poverty, the abolition of inequality in wealth and status. Again, piety by itself does not render the scientific quest unnecessary. The obligation to be intelligent, to know, to think things through, to understand the physical world, is an independent and enduring obligation. I have said above that knowledge is not enough for the attainment of goodness; still, knowledge is necessary. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Indeed, truth is an essential prerequisite of freedom.

That for at least a century or more, the influence of religion has been on the wane, cannot, I think, be gainsaid.* Limiting myself to Christianity, I propose to investigate some of the causes of this decline. In the first place, there is a purely internal cause, itself the effect of the Reformation. The liberal minds of that day, rightly stressing the appeal to private conscience, broke away from the Church, and founded what eventually became the Protestant group. As a consequence, two forces which should have remained united were thereupon sundered — on the one hand, the spirit of free inquiry, and on the other, the force of cohesiveness; and the results have been well-nigh disastrous. Deprived of its liberal elements, Catholicism settled more and more into authoritarianism; while Protestantism, bereft of all the tendencies to cohesion, gradually fell into a state of rampant individualism, and is now threatened with anarchy. A second cause has been the fact that Christian leaders have often sided with the ruling powers of darkness, with the consequence that Christianity has tended to lose the respect and the support of men of good will. The case against Catholicism on this score has often been stated. It is also true that in Britain and in this country, Protestant laymen — if not Protestant clergymen — have often placed industrial needs and values above human values. They have not sufficiently resisted the destructive onslaught of industrialism upon human rights, and especially those of the worker. In mitigation, it must also be admitted that the industrial movement, in this country at least, has resulted in the raising of the standard of living of the masses to a level higher than has ever been achieved before.

The third and most important cause of the decay of religion is the impact of naturalism upon religious faith. We are all naturalists today, or we think we are. We reduce all phenomena to natural and material categories; how, then, can we accept Christianity with its affirmation of a supernatural and spiritual reality? Again, religion talks of absolute and eternal values; but today we distrust all "absolutes." We are pragmatists and relativists; and we explain all codes and doctrines as rooted in historical and economic situations. A man so bold as to utter the word "absolute," especially in the presence of sociologists, would be well advised to wear double armor and to carry the shield of Achilles. Again, the scientist is open-minded, holding all theories in suspense; his beliefs are experimental, tentative and fluid, subject to perpetual revision in the light of new experience. But religion talks of faith, of fixed truths, even of dogmas.

Yet the matter is not so simple. If, in my capacity as a naturalist, I believe that mental processes are a mere function of the nervous system, if I think what I think because I am determined to do so by the make-up of my brain cells, what guarantee have I that I will obtain the truth — for instance the truth as to democracy? If thought is a kink in the brain, then is not even naturalism such a kink in your brain, accidental and private to you? If all values and truths are relative, then the cause for which our enemies have

* For a dissenting opinion, see Kenneth Scott Latourette's forthcoming AMERICAN SCHOLAR article, "The Spread of Christianity."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been fighting is as good from their point of view, as our cause is good for us; but if so, is not the war just another scrap or a dogfight? We have stood for the worth of human personality; but what is man that we should be mindful of him? Man, we are told, is a collection of living cells like an animal or a plant, or an aggregate of atoms like a stone. Now, we think it right to use an animal as a beast of burden, a tree for timber, and we exploit the earth for its resources. Why not use and exploit man too?

Let me not be misunderstood. People of the naturalistic faith are as decent as anyone else. Scientists, as a group, have probably more integrity and idealism than any other group today. (It is interesting to note that Dostoevski, himself a pious Christian, is much concerned in his novels with the fact that agnostics and atheists can be people of the highest character.) I am impugning nobody's sentiments and conduct. But I do wish to point out the existing disparity between the naturalist's image of man and his respect for man as a being of absolute worth. I say that the naturalist's democratic faith is an unsupported dogma, and such dogmatism is a phase of the very irrationalism which he strenuously resists.

You may retort that the hands of Christianity are not clean in this matter either, by pointing out that religion has tended to subjugate man to ecclesiastical authority and his spirit to faith. That Christianity has made much of submission and humility, I agree. The fact is that both science and Christianity exhibit an internal contradiction. I have already indicated that science, in materializing man, tends to deny his intrinsic worth. Yet science, in its demand that all theories should be subjected to the test of experience and reason, and its emphasis upon freedom of inquiry, goes on to affirm the dignity of the individual as a rational being. It is noteworthy that John Locke, the great empiricist, was also the great enemy of authoritarian government. Similarly, Christianity on the one hand declares the absolute worth of the individual by virtue of his immortal soul and of the fact that he is created in the image of God; and on the other hand, it denies (or seems to deny) this worth, when it emphasizes the authority of revelation and the virtue of humility. Yet there is truth in its doctrine of humility — the truth that there are values greater than man, to which man should be forever dedicated. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him": this noble passage from the Old Testament embodies not only the law and the prophets, but the meaning of tragedy as well.

Of all great religions, Christianity is the most naturalistic, even the most materialistic. Take its doctrine of the sacraments: the water must be applied so as to touch the person in the sacrament of baptism, and in the eucharist the bread is said to become the very body of Christ. Myths, you will say, but at least you must admit that they are myths conveying a peculiar lesson — namely, that spiritual ends must be obtained by material means. Above all, the doctrine of the Incarnation, of the Word made Flesh, proclaims that the corporeal world is a fitting temple for the divine. And the doctrine of the death and resurrection of Christ as a historical event which yet transcends history carries with it the belief that the temporal process has an absolute significance.

Finally, there is the alleged opposition between the climate of faith and the climate of scientific inquiry. The one demands finished truths, the other finds only unfinished truths. But are we so sure that we hold to no truths or values as fixed and absolute? I, for one, believe that the ideal of democracy is absolutely valid. Nor is the belief in democracy a product of experimental investigation; the order of proof is the other way around. For the appeal to the facts is grounded in the democratic principle of consent — that my opinions should be the outcome of my own experience and reflection. Does the dialectical materialist think that the dialectical law is relative to a particular historical epoch, to a particular phase of the class-warfare? The scientist may say that values and ideals are expressions of private sentiment. The scientist also cherishes the highest respect for intellectual integrity. Does he think that his sense of obligation to the ideal of integrity — a sense which conditions his entire enterprise as a scientist — is nothing but a subjective whim?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I suggest that whether we are naturalists or supernaturalists, our beliefs normally have elements which are fixed as well as elements which are subject to change. A relativist may be described as a person who conceals his absolutes from himself, thus pushing them into the unconscious. He suffers from intellectual repression. Let him bring his absolutes into the open, and by acknowledging their existence, he will make over his dogmas into rational convictions. The good life — intellectually and morally — is one which combines commitment with experiment — commitment in respect of primary premises and ideals, experiment in respect of applications and of means. But to put it thus crudely is to establish a division which does not exist; for the experimental inquiry reacts backward on the premises by way of clarifying, modifying and amplifying them. In short, sound belief is both fixed and fluid; it joins conviction to innovation, thus illustrating both the religious and the scientific tempers.

In this brief paper, terms have been left undefined, and statements have been made without adequate support. Encouraged perhaps by MacArthur's strategy of island-hopping, I have skipped over many islands of argument — not because I wished it, but because I was compelled by the logistics of space. MacArthur's difficulty came from too much space, mine from too little. But I should like to make at least one point definitely clear before I take my leave of the reader. When, in the era of the Renaissance, men all over the Western world rediscovered the methods of rational inquiry, they felt as though a new and a freer life was stretching out before their eyes. The adoption of the mode of untrammeled, insistent and empirical thought led to a liberation and an enrichment of the human spirit. Nothing that I have said should be construed as a harking back to the eras of superstition and of the dictates of authority. When religion is obscurantist then religion is wrong. When reason becomes so skeptical as to doubt all premises and to abandon all fixed points, then reason, too, is wrong. My point has been that when either one — science or religion — makes unlimited claims, it is guilty of the sin of *hubris*. And I have insisted that in our warfare against human ills we should employ the weapons both of the air and of the earth, using them in conjunction and not as independent arms.

Vertical and Horizontal Thinking

Paul Tillich

The first statement I want to make about the future of religion is the expression of a profound discomfort about the phrase "the future of religion." For this phrase conveys the idea of a product of history which may or may not have a future, whose future may be shorter or longer, which may be destroyed or merged with something else and disappear in one way or another. Such a view is logically possible, as it is logically possible to look at a man as a stimulus-response mechanism and to treat him accordingly. But the man will raise a furious protest; he will denounce this view as a denial of his human nature, of his dignity as a person. In the same way those who identify themselves with religion consider the phrase "the future of religion" as an implicit denial of its true nature, of its transcending of the modes of time.

Religion as a living experience does not ask the question of its own future. It is only interested in its content, the eternal and our relation to it. Religion cannot imagine any past or future in which man has lived or will live without an ultimate concern, i.e., without religion. Man is that being which by his very nature is ultimately concerned and therefore essentially religious. He may not

---

Professor of philosophical theology at Union Theological Seminary, PAUL TILLICH is the author of *The Interpretation of History* and *The Religious Situation.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accept this situation; he may fight against it. He may try to escape the shaking experience of being grasped by an ultimate concern. He may express the ultimate in mythical, theological, philosophical, poetic, political, or any other terms. He may avoid "religious symbols" in the narrower, traditional sense of the word. But he cannot avoid religion in the larger, more profound and more universal sense. Religion lasts as long as man lasts. It cannot disappear in human history, because a history without religion is not *human* history, which is a history in which ultimate concerns are at stake.

This is the first reaction of religion to the question of its own future. If this reaction has been expressed religion can accept the question of its future development. Indeed, religion itself asks this question, whenever a religious interpretation of history is attempted, or the contemporary situation is religiously analyzed, or the theoretical and practical needs of the Church are discussed. Without some anticipation of the future no acting in the present is possible.

The relation between the temporal and the eternal takes on two basic forms, the "vertical" and the "horizontal" one. Both belong to every religion. But it makes a great difference whether a religion emphasizes the vertical or the horizontal element. It is the thesis of this article that religion (in the sense of "ultimate concern") will return towards the "vertical" element after it has been "horizontalized" in the preceding period.

Vertical and horizontal are spatial metaphors for qualities of our religious experience. "Vertical" points to the eternal in its presence as the ground of our being and the ultimate meaning of our lives. It points to our ability to elevate ourselves over the inescapable anxiety of finitude and over the destructive despair of guilt, in our personal and social existence. The religious cult, including prayer and meditation, the aesthetic intuition and the philosophical eros, mystical union and the "quiet of the soul" in face of the vicissitudes of existence, are expressions of the vertical element in religion. "Horizontal," on the other hand, points to the transforming power of the eternal whenever it manifests itself. "Horizontal" is the prophetic fight for social justice and personal righteousness, the struggle against the structures of evil in our souls and our communities, the work for the formation of men and the world. Sacred and secular ethics, education and politics, healing and the control of nature are expressions of the horizontal element in religion. Wherever an ultimate concern expresses itself, both elements — the vertical and the horizontal — do appear. For we are ultimately concerned about what has ultimate being, and, consequently, is the ultimate good for those who participate in being. What is and what ought to be are united in the ground of all being. A religion which relates itself to the "ultimate" in terms of "being" only results in a world-defying, static mysticism, without ethical dynamics and without a world-transforming will and power. A religion which relates itself to the "ultimate" in terms of "ought to be" only results in a world-controlling technical activism, without a spiritual substance and a world-transcending will and power.

The five hundred years of Western civilization which we usually call the modern period — ending in the first half of the twentieth century — are characterized by man's largely successful attempt to gain the control over nature and society through rational analysis and construction. The more man dedicated himself to this attempt and the more actual control he gained, the more he lost the vertical element in his interpretation of life; he moved horizontally from one conquest of reality to the other. The ultimate concern of man expressed itself in terms of scientific and technical progress, of moral imperatives, educational norms and social ideals. The eternal became the background of man's horizontal activities: God was degraded to a "boundary-concept" and removed from the realm of real existence. The ultimate, that which gives meaning to life, is ahead and not above. This was a great and courageous attempt, especially in the fighting period of the modern mind. Prophetic wrath rings in the passionate words of Voltaire and Marx against the demonic distortion of the established churches, who used the vertical element in religion for the conservation of social injustice and tyrannical power, who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

used the eternal as a brake against the progress of the temporal, who identified the vertical element with conservatism and reaction. In this situation the horizontal protest was not only justified, but necessary for religion itself; it was a religious protest though it often appeared in antireligious terms; it was prophetic, even when it attacked the belief of the churches.

But the prophetic spirit disappeared from the secular mind when the victory was won. It was replaced by a self-complacent immanentism which produces means without ultimate ends, which sets purposes without an ultimate meaning, which has innumerable concerns without an ultimate concern. The expulsion of the vertical element (though historically understandable) deprived the horizontal element of its depth and its spiritual foundation. An atmosphere of unconquerable anxiety, a feeling of meaninglessness, of cynicism about principles and ideals, a despair of the future developed. Often this was covered by a normalized, conformistic existence in routine work and routine pleasure; sometimes it was alleviated by remnants of the optimistic expectations of the past. But it could not be removed any more; it became more and more typical for individuals and masses. The fact that the smashing victory of the Allied Nations and the discovery of the atomic power have not created anything like the enthusiastic hopes of the years after the first World War, but just the opposite, shows the change of the spiritual climate during the last twenty-five years. A tragic feeling about the limits of man's spiritual power — in contrast to his almost unlimited technical power — has spread all over the Western world. The transformation of our existence has ceased to be our ultimate concern and is replaced by the foundation of our existence as the content of our real concern: the pendulum has started swinging back to the vertical element in religion.

Not everything, of course, which seems to prove this movement is a real proof. The fact that the immediate presence of death for millions of people during the war has turned their minds towards the eternal does not necessarily mean a change of the basic trends in religion and culture. More significant may be the increasing influence of the Christian churches on the social and political life of the nations, as in the case of the churches of resistance in Europe, of Roman Catholicism, especially in the United States, and even (though with great restrictions) of the reestablishment of the Orthodox church in Russia. But these events could be explained either in terms of the natural reaction which follows revolutionary catastrophes, or in terms of political expediency. They do not give a clear evidence of a religious trend towards verticalism. Neither does the increase in enthusiastic groups which try to return to old mystical traditions. Things like that have always happened in periods of great insecurity and deep-rooted anxiety.

But there are genuine symptoms which give evidence that a trend towards a more vertical expression of our ultimate concern does exist in all realms of life. Much could and should be said about these symptoms and their significance for the understanding of our time. Here I can only point to them.

The vertical element in religion appears in two main types, the mystical type and the faith type. Although they do not exclude each other they must be distinguished. Both of them have reappeared — long before the world wars — with new power and meaning. Theology as well as philosophy of religion have rediscovered the meaning of the mystical experience, partly in connection with a deeper understanding of the Asiatic religions. It has become obvious that mysticism is not darkness and irrational emotion, but that it is a special way of looking at world and soul, which has its own right and its own perfection. Faith as a possible and meaningful attitude has been rediscovered by the prophetic-revolutionary movements of our period as well as by recent interpretations of religion by "Existential" philosophers and radical Protestants. It has become obvious that faith is not the belief in something which has a low degree of evidence but that faith is the state of being grasped by the eternal when it breaks into the temporal, reversing the expected course of things.

The mystical and the faith experience belong to the vertical element in religion. In correlation with them a new understanding

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of man has emerged. It has become visible that man is largely dependent on unconscious, individual and collective forces of an ambiguous character, that his conscious decisions have roots in preconscious levels, that he is not free for good and evil, but dependent on universal structures of evil and good for which he is the battlefield. It is not only theology but even more depth-psychology and sociology which have opened our eyes to this predicament of man. They have shown the tragic structures in human existence which refute any kind of utopianism, progressivistic as well as revolutionary. There is no doubt that the new emphasis on the vertical element in religion is very much strengthened by such a self-interpretation of man.

Symptomatic of the same trend are some changes in the doctrine of the Church. Its nature is not so much understood in terms of its purpose — the horizontal line — as in terms of its foundation — the vertical line. It has become obvious that receiving (the eternal) must precede acting (the temporal). Liturgical reforms in Protestantism, as well as in Catholicism, are expressions of this feeling. The "Ecumenical" movement tries to find the common principles on which all activity in all Christian churches must be based. The question of the foundation begins to overshadow the questions of operation.

The problem of the future of religion is not the problem of its relation to science, as it was in the "modern period" which also in this respect has come to an end with the beginning of this century. Historical criticism, natural sciences and recent psychology have been accepted without restriction by the predominant forces in Protestant theology. The sciences, on the other hand, have learned to distinguish their prescientific presuppositions and philosophical visions from their scientific insights. Both sides have recognized that the symbols in which our religion, i.e., our ultimate concern, expresses itself do not lie on the level of statements about the existence or non-existence of beings or a highest being. The religion of the future will be free from the more and more sterile conflict between "faith and knowledge."

The pendulum is swinging back to the vertical element in religion, and the danger is that it will swing too far. That this may happen is the justified fear of many liberal Protestants and humanists. They are afraid that Protestantism as well as humanism may disappear in this process of "verticalization." They certainly will disappear if their leaders do not understand the longing of the man of today for the eternal, from which he has been more and more cut off by the exclusive emphasis on the transformation of the temporal. The future of religion is dependent on a new, creative union of its vertical and its horizontal element.

The Autonomy of Democratic Faith

Sidney Hook

By religion I mean faith in the existence of some supernatural Power which governs human destiny and serves as a cosmic support of human ideals. Insofar as religion functions purely as a consolation to the individual for the irremediable evils and tragedies of existence, it is too personal a matter to be any one else's concern, and I shall not discuss it further. But the consolatory function of religious beliefs must not be proclaimed as valid evidence for their truth, since it is obvious that myths as well as truths may be consoling.

In recent years many large claims have been made for organized religion. It has been celebrated as the tap root of democracy, indeed of all morality. Its revival has been hailed as the best ground for reasonable hope in an enduring world peace. It has been urged

---

SIDNEY HOOK is professor of philosophy at New York University, and the author of *Reason, Social Myths and Democracy* and *The Hero in History: A Study in Limitation and Possibility.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as a specific for industrial strife, crime, poverty, and all other impediments to a just society. It has been widely asserted that we must choose between a renewed faith in religion and a faith in some totalitarian ideology which is certain to blossom wherever religion withers. A whole chorus of voices insists that the crisis of our age must be defined in these terms.

I believe all of these claims are false. The validity of democracy as a moral and political ideal does not rest upon religious doctrines. Despite the resurgence of religion during the past decade, the world is not noticeably a better place to live in. In many respects it is worse. The alternative to religion is not necessarily the brutalitarian nihilism of Hitlerism or the dictatorial, secret-police state of Stalinism. Insofar as civilization has a future, it is contingent upon the growth of ideals of a universal, democratic humanism, which embraces what is morally best in religion, fortified by reliance not on supernatural dogmas but on the instruments of enlightened, scientific intelligence. Religion has had thousands of years to unify the world into a semblance of a just and cooperative world order. It has failed. Democratic humanism may fail, too. That depends, in part, upon whether the ardor and devotion that has been expended on transcendental objects of faith can be transferred to the democratic heritage as a pattern for the reconstruction of social life.

It is an open question whether the revival of religious beliefs and institutions may not lead to the exacerbation of differences among men. For most religions make claims to being the exclusive repositories of God's truth, acceptance of which is a necessary condition of salvation. Were these claims to be abandoned, the justification for separate religious organizations would largely disappear. But to a militant believer religion means *the* religion — his own. When he looks to the future of religion to liberate mankind from its burden of evils, he looks primarily to his own church and its teachings.

It is hard to find a doctrine common to all religious faiths and of sufficient importance to override doctrinal differences. Belief in the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God comes closest perhaps to being the common article of faith of all religious groups. It is this belief, we are told, on which the democratic philosophy rests. To accept the latter and reject the former is to be guilty of inconsistency, of sentimental and unintelligent belief in democracy.

Logically, the derivation of democracy from this belief is a complete *non sequitur*. The proposition that all men are brothers, whether taken theologically or biologically, does not entail any proposition essential to the democratic faith. No matter what the origin of man is, supernatural or natural, we cannot legitimately infer from his equality in supernatural status or natural fact, that men should enjoy equality of opportunity or equality of citizenship. These democratic beliefs are compatible with many different alleged "presuppositions." Our reasons for accepting democracy rather than its ethical and political alternatives are not only independent of our reasons for accepting the theological or biological brotherhood of man; they are far more warranted in the light of experience. This is true for any moral ideal. Our grounds for belief in honesty and kindness do not depend upon belief in supernatural dogma or other "presuppositions." We would be horrified by anyone who told us that if he surrendered his belief in the existence of God or the second law of thermodynamics or what not, he would no longer regard dishonesty and cruelty as morally wrong. The same logic holds for the belief in the democratic ideal. It is in terms of its fruits and consequences in human experience that we accept or reject it: not in terms of supernatural belief, whether taken literally or metaphorically.

Historically, there is little warrant for the assertion that religious dogmas are the prime source of modern democracy. The most religious countries are notoriously not the most democratic ones. The historical record shows that organized religion has accommodated itself to all social systems and forms of government, no matter how tyrannical, which have tolerated its existence. In some countries it has actively supported social iniquities. Undeniably there have been religious movements, and still more often, great re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ligious personalities, that have aided the cause of freedom. What moved them in the main were moral insights and a complex of historical interests, shared by secular movements, too, and not special theological dogmas. For these dogmas served as identical premises in the thinking of those who opposed progressive movements. We know that Judaism countenanced slavery, while Christianity never condemned it in principle. Organized religion was one of the mainstays of feudalism. In Spain today it supports Franco. In Russia it supports Stalin — when he lets it.

The organizational structure of institutions based on supernatural dogmas and of the social systems they actively support tends toward theocracy, not democracy. Recognition of the rights of individual conscience, toleration of religious minorities, freedom of scientific inquiry, abolition of child labor, birth control, the use of anaesthetics, secular education, separation of church and state, and other liberal and humane practices have made their way in the face of opposition of organized religion.

It is sometimes maintained that nonreligious protagonists for a better world have drawn their inspiration and fire from the dying embers of a religious faith which, despite their denials, still glow within them. This is obviously question-begging, for it assumes that no validation of moral ideals is possible except in terms of supernatural belief — precisely the point at issue. It would be truer to say that religious believers who have supported the cause of social justice have been moved by the evidence of experience and not by the compelling force of theological doctrine. The evidence that men share a common lot and destiny in a world of atomic power is far stronger than the evidence that they share a common origin.

Those who see promise in the revival of religion overlook the significance of the fact that supernatural faith is marked by the sharpest dualism in its conception of the place of man in nature. This dualism is the root source of ambiguity in the application of religious dogmas. It denies that man is a child of nature. It endows him with an immortal soul which is essentially independent of his body and his culture. Man's soul is the most precious thing about him. He can and must keep it pure, no matter what the world, his transitory home, is like. It is as immortal souls that all men are equal before God. And this equality is essentially unaffected by any kind of social and political inequality. Consequently, it is always possible to square supernatural dogmas with societies in which democracy is absent — or present. It is never clear on religious grounds alone how its dogmas are being applied. That is why they are compatible with social policies that are mutually contradictory to each other. More important still, it is impossible within the framework of religious thought to find a *method* which will enable us to judge and negotiate conflicting interests in empirical situations. A common supernatural faith therefore provides no principle of direction for the intelligent control of social change.

Religion is sometimes understood not as involving belief in the supernatural or acceptance of doctrine, but as an attitude of ultimate concern, or in James's phrase, "a man's total reaction upon life." In this sense everyone who is passionately alive to something exciting in the world or to some possibility struggling to be born, is religious; the irreligious, apparently, are those who are dead but still unburied. We possess a number of perfectly good words to designate this activity of vital emotional interest, and I prefer not to be converted to religion by definition. But if we use the term in this sense, there is a certain danger in equating religion with any large faith and then welcoming a general revival of religion. For it underestimates, when it does not ignore, the quality, content and fruits of faith, which should be of infinitely greater concern to us than the bare act of faith, no matter how intense. Better a man of little faith in good than of great faith in evil.

A few years ago it was quite fashionable to speak of Fascism as a great faith which integrated the personality of its believers, elicited a passionate devotion to objects greater than themselves, and brought a firm discipline into their emotional life. The fruits of that faith were evident even in the past to all who wished to know the truth. But in the moment of its triumph, many

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bowed down in vulgar worship of power, blinded by its nimbus of glory. Similarly, there are today some who have suddenly discovered that the Russian Communist faith is the only basis upon which the civilized tradition can be rebuilt. Its total reign of terror, which has grown in intensity over the years, is callously written off as part of the costs of "progress," although the costs of Christianity, the industrial revolution, capitalism, and democracy are computed with great care and indignation. In the case of both Fascism and Communism, we observe a sharp dissociation between ends and means, and a substitution of unlimited faith in the future for the exercise of intelligence and humanity in the present. These faiths should be judged, not by the intensity with which they are held, but by their consequences on the lives of the human beings who accept them, on the lives of their victims, and on the lives of those on whom they are *imposed*. For in countries where such faiths are official, they are not freely selected among alternatives. In short, religious faith cannot be separated from doctrines, and from the practices to which doctrines lead or which they justify.

Some who deplore totalitarian faiths because of their degrading effects express the wish that the fanaticism with which their adherents are imbued could be harnessed to faith in democracy. This disregards the ways in which what is most typical in totalitarian faith is indissolubly bound up with its creed and practices — a union that is happily no longer true in present-day religion. A democrat cannot be fanatical in the same way as a Nazi or Communist, for whom an unanalyzed end justifies the use of *any* means. But it does not follow that because he is humane and intelligent a democrat cannot be passionate and active in his faith, that he must be a political Hamlet, irresolute before the combination of toughness and chicanery with which his totalitarian opponents confront him.

Instead of a revival of religious faith in general, we should work specifically towards a revival, or a new birth, of faith in democracy. Such a faith is the only one that can unify society without imposing uniformity upon it. It is a faith that can embrace believers and non-believers in a vast number of different "presuppositions" — theological, metaphysical, naturalistic. For these are all compatible with democracy. Required of those who profess them is only that they sincerely accept the democratic practices by which equality of concern for all individuals, collective participation, and freely given consent of the governed — the cardinal doctrine of democratic faith — are implemented. It excludes none but avowed totalitarians and the secret totalitarians who redefine democracy to make it synonymous with its opposite. Such a democratic faith has many fronts on which to fight: race relations, education, social, political and economic organization. It does not fear to use power, otherwise it is at the mercy of non-democratic faiths. It seeks to tame power by making it intelligent and responsible, i.e., designed to achieve morally inclusive ends through institutions that provide for wide participation and open criticism.

As a social philosophy, the democratic faith accepts that measure of socialism which would liberate the productive forces of modern technology without curtailing the freedoms enshrined in the Bill of Rights, which would remove the blight of poverty and the threat of insecurity without making a fetish of efficiency and centralization, which would provide, as far as possible, those objective conditions of social and cultural life in whose absence "equality of opportunity for all" is a hollow phrase. It may be a tautology to say that such a form of socialism (the word is not essential — perhaps it is too late to save it from its totalitarian kidnappers) can only exist where political democracy exists. But a tautology is important when contraposed to an absurdity — such as the view that socialism can be achieved by the political dictatorship of a minority party.

The democratic faith is not only a social philosophy but a personal philosophy as well. It calls for a mode of behavior in our daily interchanges with each other that makes the inescapable occasions of differences and dispute opportunities for cooperative discussion in which all interests receive a fair hearing. It recognizes that no profound social change is possible which does not involve a change in institutions, in the impersonal relationships

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which govern men. But it also recognizes that institutions are even less capable than machines of running according to blueprints and plans alone. No matter how generous the declared purposes of an institution may be, unless it is operated by men and women dedicated in their own lives to these purposes, it can easily be transformed into an agency of human oppression.

There is nothing promised by a revival of religious faith, considered in terms of doctrine, which is not promised by a new growth of faith in democracy. But there are some things threatened by the revival of the first which are not threatened by the growth of the second.

How to inspire, extend and strengthen faith in democracy, and build a mass movement of men and women personally dedicated to it, is a difficult problem which cannot be treated here. But it is clear that although devotees of the democratic faith may be found the world over, the most practical opportunities exist where democratic traditions have until now, despite all their imperfections, been strongest. In countries in which political democracy still exists, we have something to go on, a certain pattern of democratic life, and an area of freedom in which it can be enriched and deepened. If the destinies of these countries can be linked together in a common resolve not merely to preserve political democracy but to build democracy as a way of life into the very fabric of their social institutions, they will conquer the world not by force of arms but by force of example. For democracy is like love in this: it cannot be brought to life in others by command. Shared experience, sympathetic understanding, and good works are ultimately the best nourishment for democratic convictions.

COMMENTS AND REJOINDERS

EDITOR'S NOTE. — *The original articles were written independently. Then each of the contributors was sent copies of the other two papers and asked to comment briefly on them. No restrictions, except those of space, were imposed — hence the variations in method of these rebuttals.*

REPLY BY RAPHAEL DEMOS

Mr. Hook points out the very real truth that many and great evils have been perpetrated in the name of religion, or at any rate by religious people. But I would urge that the primary question is whether religious belief is true, not whether it is useful, even morally; and (unless Mr. Hook is speaking as a pragmatist) I would add that the problem of the fruits of religion is irrelevant to the problem of its truth. The reader may retort: "But religion has nothing to do with truth; religion is myth and poetry; if you want facts, it is in science that you must look for them."

I wonder. When I was very young I moved among religious circles by whom I was taught that evil is never victorious in the world, that when evil takes place some good is sure to come out of it. And when I could not see the good coming out of the evil I was exhorted to believe that it did, all the same, in God's mysterious dispensation. "There you are," the reader will interject. "Religion is pure dogma overriding experience."

But wait. When I grew older, I became intimate with men in the sciences; and now I was told that miracles never happen, and that there is nothing which cannot be finally explained by physical causes. If (for instance) an event transpired which infringed on the law of conservation of energy, why, that must be due to some unobserved friction: if any given law is violated, there is a wider law around the corner to account for the violation. And I was told by my scientific friends to believe that the explanation was there even when I could not see it.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Surely, the scientific is like the religious attitude, in that both go beyond experience and anticipate it. If the one is a dogma, so is the other. Religion presupposes the view that there is no final defeat for a good cause; science that every event happens according to a general law. Both views are *a priori* in the sense that no present experience can prove either one to be false. Indeed, sometimes my scientific friends went so far as to *define* the real in terms of what is predictable; so the experience of a miracle is illusory by definition. That reminds me of the Christian Scientists who maintain that evil is an illusion, since the real is defined as goodness.

Even more, the two fundamental beliefs are alike in what they say about the world. Religion says that there is a moral order, science that there is a rational (mechanical) order in the world. If the first soothes human feelings, so does the second. Both are ways of making "sense" out of the chaos of experience. For myself, I don't think that either one expresses mere faith; both are insights, although not purely empirical insights.

In his recent work, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Bertrand Russell admits that the principle of induction cannot be based upon experience, and that to this extent (and a very important one, too) science fails to be empirical (p. 674). Fine, you say; science is in the same boat with religion. But surprisingly enough, Mr. Russell fails to draw that conclusion. Despite his admission, he insists that theology is dogma, and science — and only science — is knowledge (p. xiii). This is such a gross inconsistency that I can ascribe it only to prejudice. Perhaps if the philosophical naturalists stop worrying about the prejudices of the theologicians, they will have a chance to see their own.

REPLY BY PAUL TILLICH

There are many statements in the article of Mr. Demos with which I fully agree. Perhaps it is due to different experiences that he still fights against the claim of science to transform human nature, while I feel that science itself has advanced beyond the stage in which it made such claims. As I say in my article, I do *not* believe that the problem of "religion and science" will be a basic problem of the religion of the future. The dogmatism of the scientists is slowly disappearing, and so is what Dr. Demos rightly calls "scientific imperialism." The attitude of the inventors of the atom bomb in the first months after its successful application was a very impressive unity of scientific pride and moral despair.

Mr. Demos is aware of the problem of horizontal and vertical thinking. He derives the decay of religion in the last period of history, amongst other reasons, from a lack of transforming power both in Catholicism and Protestantism. But he does not take this side as seriously as he should, and as Mr. Hook does. His formulations on this point are not very satisfactory. If "social reform is a special problem to be tackled separately," the relation of social reform to the "Kingdom of God" is wanting. Social reform becomes an important task for man's historical activities, but it is not accepted as an expression of our ultimate concern. This disconnection of the horizontal with the vertical line is not overcome when the interdependence of social changes and the change in the "heart" are emphasized. This is not the problem of our present situation and of the religion of the future. The "change of the heart" is a permanent religious problem, independent of the development of religion and civilization.

It is simply *not* true that in especially religious periods the hearts of men are more open to change than in secular periods. Religion can be as "demonic" as antireligion. The problem of religion and social reform lies on a deeper level than the problem of personal life and institution. It is the question of "historical grace" which forms personalities and through them institutions. Looking into the darkness of the future we must ask whether there will be "grace" in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history strong enough to overcome the threat of self-destruction and chaos which we are facing in our time. The religion of the future will not be based on the conversion of more individuals, but on the readiness of the coming generation to receive the historical grace which is needed for the continuation of human history. If a democracy, in the religious sense in which Mr. Hook understands it and in which Mr. Demos accepts it, were to appear, this would be an expression of the historical grace of which I am speaking. But historical grace, though it works horizontally, is received vertically. You cannot produce it; you can only be prepared for it by taking the present absolutely seriously. This is what the prophets did. And perhaps what I most miss in the paper of Mr. Demos is a stronger expression of the prophetic spirit of religion, and especially of Christianity — just as in Mr. Hook's paper I miss an expression of the priestly spirit.

In the first draft of my own paper I had a short paragraph stating that it is easy to deny any future to religion if religion is defined in a way which makes it not only unacceptable to modern thought, but also unacceptable to religion itself. But this is just what Mr. Hook does. When he describes religion as the "faith in the existence of some supernatural Power," he uses terms each of which must be opposed as inadequate by the religious consciousness. There is no *faith* in the existence of something. There is belief that something does or does not exist; but this is not a religious question. The object of religious faith is not *existence*. According to classical theology, it lies beyond this category. And the object of religious faith is not "some Power." Religion, in its whole history, has successfully (and unsuccessfully) fought against the identification of the divine with some Power, rightly considering the realm of powers as the object of magic belief, and — if the powers receive religious valuation — as the object of idolatry. Finally, the word "*supernatural*" should, as with all ambiguous terms, not be used without having been defined. If it means a sphere of beings (or of one being) besides and above the whole of what "has grown" (*physis*) it describes a realm of superstitious imagination. If it means the Ground and Aim of all beings, it should not be called supernatural.

If the definition of religion given by Mr. Hook were correct, all the consequences he derives from it would be correct too. It is, of course, not evident at all that religion in his sense is the necessary foundation of social progress and democracy. But it seems to me an essential of fairness towards every sphere of life to judge it according to its nature and not according to its distortions. As democracy should not be judged on the basis of the voting lever, of the party machines and pressure groups, or of the chances it gives for capitalistic exploitation and dishonest propaganda, so religion should not be judged on the basis of its superstitious and idolatric elements and the chances it gives for ecclesiastical mechanization and hierarchical power politics. Religion as well as democracy should be judged on the basis of its most meaningful and advanced self-interpretation.

Mr. Hook's answer to the question of the future of religion belongs unambiguously to the horizontal type of thinking, as I have called it in my own answer. His faith is "the democratic faith." He wants this faith to replace the religious faith. He calls it a social philosophy — and a personal philosophy as well. But every word he uses shows that it is for him a religion, a matter of ultimate concern, and only in the second place a theory. Faith is a religious behavior, a behavior which concerns the personality as a whole. And if somebody speaks of his democratic *faith* he expresses the first article of a religious creed. Therefore, it is only consistent when Mr. Hook formulates a "cardinal doctrine of democratic faith" and draws a sharp line between those with whom a cooperative discussion is desirable and those who are "excluded," and when he speaks of the democratic faith as a fighting faith, which even does not fear the use of power against the non-democratic faiths. This is not the way of philosophy, but it is the way of all historical religions; and if democracy is the faith of the future it must take this way.

I can follow this way to a great extent. But something is missing in it — the answer to a few "vertical" questions: what is the spiritual source and center in a community

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

based on the democratic faith? What is the power capable of conquering the anti-democratic forces in the human soul? What is the source of reconciliation with oneself and one's world in a merely horizontal religion? What has been and is the meaning of life for those who died and will die without having seen the promised realm of democracy?

REPLY BY SIDNEY HOOK

I have searched Mr. Demos' paper very carefully for evidence of the "need" for religion and its "truth." What I have found is only an affirmation of the need for moral judgment and action — which no one disputes — and a denial that scientific method is competent to treat of moral questions. There is not a single argument to show that morality rests upon religious dogmas of any kind. Indeed, Mr. Demos seems unaware of the fact that in distinguishing between good and bad religions, he is logically subordinating religion to morality. What his thesis required him to establish, however, was that morality "entails" some "extra-human law" or "supernatural reality" as primary. Proof of this thesis, so necessary for Mr. Demos' position, if it could be given, hardly demands the space at MacArthur's disposal.

The argument that scientific method is irrelevant to the validation of moral judgment rests on a fundamental confusion between the general pattern of scientific inquiry which furnishes canons of gathering and evaluating evidence in every field in which we make a claim to have knowledge, and the specialized techniques employed in the natural sciences. Those who believe that it is possible to engage in a scientific study of man and human aims do not necessarily rely on "the methods of the laboratory." There are many domains in which we have reliable knowledge not won by laboratory methods. The proposal to treat aims scientifically asks us to regard them as hypotheses and to test them by investigation into their causes, the concrete difficulties they seek to resolve, their logical implications, and the probable consequences of the means used to achieve them. There is no more circularity in this procedure than in any other scientific inquiry, *if we take our problems one at a time.* No more in one case than in the other are infallible institutions required as a final resting point for workable solutions.

Those who urge this approach do not maintain that it will necessarily solve our moral and social problems. They offer it as something to be tried. It is simply not true, as Mr. Demos asserts, that scientific method has been brought to bear in any large measure on basic human and social issues. Until now there has been greater reliance upon authority, drift, improvisation, and the absolutes of property, nation, race and state. The scientific study of man in his social dimensions has hardly begun. If scientific method is irrelevant to human values, why should Mr. Demos fear its "imperialism"? The present state of the world on his view must be attributed not to the extension of scientific method — for if it is irrelevant to values it cannot corrupt them — but to the inadequacy of the religious approach to the value problems and predicaments of the modern world.

How does Mr. Demos justify *his* values? He tells us he is an absolutist. There are other absolutists in the world who violently disagree with him. How does he resolve his differences with them? By what method does he establish his absolutist convictions as "rational" and theirs as "dogmas"? Were he a consistent absolutist he would have to fall back on another absolutist conviction — if not on the method of force by which so many absolutists in the past have sought to settle their differences. But I am happy to observe that Mr. Demos is an inconsistent absolutist. He writes: "The good life, intellectually and morally, is one which combines commitment with experiment — commitment in respect to primary premises and ideals, experiment in respect to applications and means. But to put it thus crudely is to establish a division which does not exist;

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for the experimental inquiry reacts backward on the premises by way of clarifying, modifying and amplifying them" (my italics). This is as close to experimentalism as any absolutist ever got, and I am content to accept the statement as a fair description of the proper method of testing all ideals. I very much fear, however, that Mr. Demos will have difficulty in reconciling it with his declarations that some ideals are "absolutely valid" (when they may have to be modified!), that aims are beyond scientific investigation, and that not the fruits of experience but the dogmas of religion validate them.

Mr. Demos' fear of the extension of scientific method to the study of man may be traced perhaps to his misconception of the doctrines of naturalism. I am acquainted with no outstanding contemporary naturalist philosopher who asserts that "mental processes are a *mere* function of the nervous system" (my italics), or that "thought is a kink in the brain." This is the position of reductive materialists whom naturalists sharply criticize. To say that man and the amoeba are both organizations of cells is not incompatible with recognizing, as all naturalists do, that man has powers of thought and action which the amoeba does not have. Naturalists assert that all powers, qualities and feelings attributable to man are contingent upon the existence of certain organic structures, and that there is no evidence for the existence of disembodied spirit. They wholeheartedly recognize the presence of the distinctively human qualities manifested in experience, and seek by wise control of causes and consequences "to turn the friction of material forces into the light of ideal goods" (Santayana).

Why should such beliefs imperil the existence of values? On the contrary, this is a philosophy which makes intelligible the place of man in nature, the efficacy of values in human life, and the function of reflection in choosing values. Because it rejects the notion that men are naturally evil, it is not committed to the equivalent absurdity that men are naturally good. Good and evil are qualities that men acquire in a specific culture in virtue of their habits of feeling, thought and action. Intelligence is not an abstract power that merely registers facts. It is a disposition to act in certain ways which becomes stronger as we persist in its exercise. It may fail before the intractabilities of man and things. But where is there a more reliable alternative? Mr. Demos wants guarantees of success from a cosmos that gives us only the *chance* to make good. The whole moral enterprise is an adventure full of troubles and challenges that call not for soothing draughts of salvation but for more and more applied intelligence to the problems at hand. The consequences, both in logic and practice, of the belief that ends as well as means can be tested and secured by the methods of intelligence involve far less subjectivism and relativism than the consequences of the mutually exclusive absolutisms that have warred with each other throughout history.

Mr. Tillich has given us a psychology of religious experience unrelated to anything recognizable as religion. To define man as "essentially," and therefore necessarily, religious, so that he has no basic choice in the matter, seems to me arbitrary, and inadequate to the fact that at some point all religions embrace a dogma or make a claim to truth. The distinction between the "vertical and horizontal" elements in religious experience, divorced from objects of faith, reduces to a contrast between the attitude of detached concern or critical self-awareness on the one hand, and active intelligent absorption on the other. If valid, this holds for all experience and not for distinctively religious experience alone. Why cannot the "vertical" dimension characterize "horizontal" activity, too? Since the rationale of intelligence is self-critical, which cannot be said of any other principle, natural or supernatural, it always has an *implicit* "vertical" dimension. Peace and a balanced perspective may be found in action as well as resignation, and what is eternally true must be true here and now.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

The Post-Postwar World

It is some months since V-J Day, and we may, from all signs, be said to be pretty deep into the Postwar World. For years during the War, the Postwar World was a fine-sounding, vaguely precise ideal to which to refer. All futures, all hopes, all aspirations were to be cashed in at that eventual destination. Well, here it is, here and now. This is it. The discharge buttons are almost as numerous as the uniforms; the beauty contests and the aluminum saucepans and heavy cream are with us again. The Postwar World, however, in one sense has ceased to be. It is no longer there as an ideal limit, a *terminus ad quem*, a point toward which all action and all meaning can be referred. To what post-Postwar World, what roughly calculated limit, can we refer the arrival of world government, of the good society, the good life? In desperation, perhaps, for some fixed point of reference, some of us already are beginning to talk about World War III. At least there is a definiteness, though a terrible one, about that. Or did we all along in our simple hearts mean by the Postwar World what in other days has always been meant hopefully by Utopia? Now with the atomic bomb, it is Utopia — or Nirvana.

On Pride in Being Here and Now

I have been running across condescending references to the twenties. The condescension is not toward the once-vaunted flaming youth of the period, but to the ideas current, or allegedly current at that time: the smug materialism, the easy behaviorism, the narrow psychologism of that paleolithic period. There is nothing quite like the intellectual condescension of one generation toward the ideas of the generation just preceding it. It is, therefore, the young, particularly, who pour scorn upon the notions current at the time of the youth of their fathers. But the middle-aged these days are busy saying "peccavi" with respect to the things they believed, or said they believed, when they were striplings.

Sometimes, as one hears the dismissal, impatient or patronizing, of notions only dated by a decade or two, one wonders what is so self-validating anyway about truths whose chief claim to impressiveness is that they are being uttered at this minute. The tone of actuality has a certain convincingness, it must be admitted, as have words written only last month or last week or last night. Still, one would think that anyone with any slight knowledge of history, of the changing winds of doctrine, and of the familiar cycles of opinion, would know better than to be taken in by any seeming ultimacy in some current vocabulary of wisdom. Does it go without saying, for instance, that Aldous Huxley's mysticism is any nearer the truth than his nihilism was in the twenties? Perhaps; but his Hollywood Upanishads have the forensic advantage of being dated today; his more earthbound opinions are twenty-five years old. Does it follow that the shock of war and of the atomic bomb has brought the truth nearer to all mankind?

It is not hard to imagine that about 1965, if there is anybody left alive to express intellectual judgments, some young critic, terribly *au courant*, or some elderly thinker, having seen a later light, will be saying:

> One must, of course, realize that the writers and thinkers (not always identical) of the thirties or forties were not in a position to take a long view, or to speak with composure of the noisy and noisome circumstances under which they tried quietly to think. First a great depression, then for a decade the shifting shadow of a World War, then

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the second World War itself, the most devastating in all history, coming to a climax in the unleashing of atomic energies that carried the threat of the possible devastation of all mankind — no wonder there were all manner of flights to all kinds of refuges. There were outbursts of mysticism, of cynicism, of despair.

There was an epidemic, too, of soft caesuras, of all sorts of muddleheadedness, crackpot paths to all sorts of magical salvations, spiritual or economic. No wonder, either, that social theory, and philosophy itself, became infected with self-conscious psychologism, with endless discussions of the motives behind motives, the feelings hidden below feelings, the fears of the fear of fear. Looking back now from a much less crowded planet (for since the end of the First Atomic War, the planet is much less populated) we see what a confused, chaotic, hysteric world the intellectuals had come to live in in the dreadful thirties, the furious forties. Novelists turned to revamping forgotten "miracles" or turned to preaching philosophies with strange nostrums of mysterious salvations. Sometimes, after a lifetime faithful to rigorous method and exact observation, a scientist would right-about-face to suggest that the solution of social and political ills lay in some mystic inner change, some purple sentiment, a moral presto chango. Philosophers, many of them, made common cause with fancy-sounding psycho-anthropologists. It may be hoped that in this Year of Grace, 1965, when there are so few of us left, we survivors will not relapse into such turbid nonsense. At least we have no housing problem now to addle our heads. We can see from this quiet distance in this spacious emptiness why, in the bloody fanfare of the congested forties, a great many queer hysterias rather smugly passed for thought. In those days it was often not possible from their writings to tell which was the patient and which the psychiatrist. The atomic bomb, it now appears twenty years later, not only has helped to clear the planet; it has helped to clear the air.

Young Veterans and Heroes in Sack Suits

Whatever is going to happen to certain words that have always had a touch of the grandiose and the remote? "Heroism," for instance. Intellectually one is aware that the young man before one, covered as he is with a "fruit salad" of decorations, is not only officially but actually a hero. But it is very hard to associate the modest youth, wondering what profession he ought to go into, with the heroes of Homer, or even the heroics of Strauss's *Heldenleben*. What is to become of the old phrases—"the heroic mould," for instance? The hero here in a sack suit the day after his discharge, or even in his uniform the day before it, is slight in build, casual in manner, unobtrusive in speech. And he is likely to have a sense of humor, too, which does not seem to have been true of the great figures of the Norse Sagas. (As for Aeneas, he was given to tears rather than to laughter.) And then the term "veteran" still suggests the grizzled, hardened, toughened survivor of many long years—say, the ten years before Troy. Some of our heroes are the survivors of many campaigns over a good number of years. But here they come back, many of them, all of twenty-one. And in the Air Forces, a Dean among veterans may actually have reached twenty-five. After all, we perhaps do not need new words. We may have to revise our notion of a veteran, but the heroes of the great tradition have always been young, handsome, modest. And our heroes have patently more generosity and idealism than is always obvious in Ulysses.

War Without Tears

From long force of habit during the war, many of us are still tuning into news reports with the lurking feeling that something world-shaking may have happened during the preceding hour. Some of the more excitable news reporters haven't cooled down yet, and a subway tie-up is exclaimed about with the same intensity that used to greet a major victory a year ago. In war at least something clearly seems to happen. Is it not the human dilemma that the human race wishes the quietude of peace without the boredom of it? Perhaps the tensions of conflict can be enjoyed with smaller stakes than lives. I notice an arrangement for a bloodless peacetime war has already been made in England. It is a new magazine for philosophical discussion, with the name "Polemic." Listed for early publication are articles by some of the best-known philosophical writers in England and some of the most combative ones, among others Bertrand Russell and C. E. M. Joad. "Polemic"! The title gives away an open secret in philosophy: that philosophers, at least a good many professionals, are more interested in keeping up the argument than inquiring into the truth. A well-known philosopher was described at a testi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

monial dinner tendered him as "having a morbid fear that somebody might agree with him." If we should know the truth and the truth should make us free, some of us doubtless would relish most the freedom to question whether it was really the truth at all.

Interval for Contemplation

Leisure breeds contemplation, or is at least the breeding ground for it, and what are the free spaces for leisure in the modern world?

Life, even in universities is, as William James complained, only a series of interruptions. Even when one is free, one is committed in thought. But there is one time when the will is paralyzed, all action seems remote, everything is at one remove. It is during the stages, early or late, of grippe. Aspirin has quieted the aches and pains, and fever the energies. One is too weary to hold even a book, and one is surfeited even with sleep. I think it may well have been in some early stages of grippe that early man made the first great speculative guesses as to the nature of things. "All is water," said Thales, and I should not be surprised to learn that his eyes were streaming at the moment of this famous ontological utterance.

With outer pressures removed, inner meditation begins. This is the time when, sheltered even from the telephone, internal soliloquy can have its scope. It is not, perhaps, the time for organized thinking. Intuitions begin, hypotheses are dreamily initiated under the influence of aspirin or phenacetin. In the lethargy of a low fever, conclusions are not firmly arrived at. Thoughts begin and waver, and taper off. But the themes come back. Nothing immediate matters now, and one lies wondering a little what ultimately matters at all. And the play of memory released comes into delightful being, recollection uncensored by the necessities of daily routine. Friends perhaps long-forgotten come into consciousness without the slightest uneasiness at the letters one has long owed them. The committee one would not have missed for worlds now seems distant and trivial, and tea long ago in a garden near Oxford seems credibly vivid and ultimate. It does not even seem urgent to finish these meditations for the deadline of press day for The American Scholar. One would daydream on in utter if languid peace. But what is this I see before me? Someone with a thermometer and a bottle of aspirin — even in grippe the world is too much with us.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Revolving Bookstand

Art and the Prejudicial Tendency

Douglas Rigby

The only enforced observers of modern art we know of were a family of Tahitian porkers who once were surrounded by more than the usual tropical decorations. Their stockade was constructed of Gauguin woodcarvings which had fallen into the hands of a French cleric shortly after the artist's death. Although no report exists of said porkers' critical stand in the matter, one reliable record does remain. Years later the good Father Xavier, upon being convinced that his act had been one of irremediable despoilment, meekly owned to error conceived in ignorance.

No such confession has as yet appeared from the pen of the popular Thomas Craven; nor should we expect one, since his motivation in hewing at the Post-Impressionist masters sprang not from imperceptivity alone. In the pages of *Men of Art* (1931) and *Modern Art* (1934, rev. 1940) his ax was wielded apparently in dual purpose — to free American artists from the concentration camp of "foreign art," and to vent his own curiously intense hatred of the total French aesthetic and of France herself. The fact is important only because Craven was to become our most vulgarly known writer on art, and because he so valiantly helped to bring about that strong new nationalism in studio, gallery, and museum, which still flourishes even among our hopeful sprouts of political internationalism.

There is of course no quarrel here with the inculcation of self-reliance in the native artist or, in the observer, of a just appreciation of home products. Unfortunately, however, nationalism in art as in politics goes further than good reason would allow, whenever, in denying cultural riches merely because they are foreign, it builds upon a prejudicial base of exclusiveness. Obviously a course of this nature, if unchecked, robs the community of the full warm pleasure potential in an art unbadgered by the mean irrelevance of bickering provincialism.

As an illuminating comparison, it may be noted that the publication here in recent years of several score novels and non-fiction books by foreigners has elicited no nationalistic uproar. Had our writers, in talent and ability, fallen generally far below the outlanders, however, there might well have been a storm of protest, with cries for a legislative wall to keep out the foreign stuff. This the native art world actually demanded. In music also a clamor arose, since our composers and performers had been faring rather poorly in the open market. Among other choice historical episodes the pre-debut acclamation, nearly twenty years ago, of Marion Nevada Talley, the operatic aspirant, will perhaps be recalled. It was front-page news over the nation, but the national joy remained pre-debut.

In the arts, when we use the term internationalism it does not mean the acceptance of an artist *because* he is of foreign origin. It means rather that values of appraisal should — in the case of painting, for example — be

---

DOUGLAS RIGBY, artist and writer, has lectured and written extensively on art. His recent book, *Lock, Stock and Barrel*, written in collaboration with his wife, Elizabeth Rigby, tells the comprehensive story of collecting and collectors.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

limited exclusively to the painting content, with the least possible discriminatory coloration added by the onlooker. The average onlooker at this point readily grants that the enjoyment of painting as a kind of language or series of idioms belongs chiefly to the specialist. Although there is nothing to take the place of the actual reading of paintings or even of good facsimile reproductions, those familiar with the illuminating properties of written definition and interpretation will hardly deny that some men offer valuable aid to the development of insight. In his introduction to a recent book of merit,[1] Booth Tarkington uses nothing more impressive than an old saw to observe this fact notably.

"Why," asks Mr. Tarkington, "should anyone need to be told how to look at pictures? Because two heads are better than one." This is particularly true when one of the heads belongs to a man such as Lionello Venturi; and it also serves to indicate the importance, especially to a young nation still in process of forming its tastes, of depending upon guides of discipline and integrity who are able to stay within reasonable bounds of their subject.

When Craven became Moses to our tribe lost in the wilderness of Modern Art, his oracle tablet was flung among the strays to remind them of law and right thinking. American artists *had* been too overawed by the French school. Shock treatment was perhaps justified in bringing confidence to the American scene; and if it failed to produce good pictures, at least it helped to open museums to exhibitions and to the purchase of contemporary native work.

In the process of presenting the case for modern American art, however, the new aesthetics were distorted to an incredibly harmful degree. It should have been apparent that American artists could not very well be "modern" unless they were either originators themselves or had first become disciples of modern leaders. To suggest, for example, that Mr. Craven's favorite homegrown trio, the Messrs Curry, Benton and Wood, could unseat a dozen originators from Cézanne to Picasso may have seemed absurd to some, but not to the nationalists.

The public loved to hear that Cézanne was a nobody, that Van Gogh (before he was, willy-nilly, sanctified by popular acclaim) would not live, or that members of the School of Paris (headed by Picasso and including, until then, almost every original artist of note in the Western world) were arid fakers. For this service the public rewarded Mr. Craven by purchasing his writings beyond those of any other "popularizer" of art.

Yet the genuine expression of a people grows naturally, needs no will to greatness (*pour la patrie*), cannot *command* genius to appear. The fruits of art ripen through the total historical effects. In the attempt to build up national or sectional prestige in art, then, the critical and scholarly waste is unfortunate, since finally the art in question must stand or fall according to its content and historical position.

Considering its few years and its preoccupation with physical expansion for most of its history, America has a fairly rich artistic heritage; but in the recent past all our artists brought their knowledge of art from Europe, and why indeed should it be a matter for anguish that the influence of Europe is still strong among us?

The reception accorded the publication of *William Sidney Mount*[2] coincides with a resurgence of genre painting, and is symptomatic of the current nationalistic trend. Certainly there was more loud music in the air for this dependable pedestrian painter of the nineteenth century than a regional painter would normally warrant, for there are no rich gifts in Mount. He was workmanlike, neat and ordinary — important, one might say, in a thin mixture; and the book is a sound job. But luck has also helped Mount out: his enthusiasts, for want of higher talents to praise, underline the fact that he never went to Europe and that he was faithful to the American scene. (When the hunt is on in his bailiwick and no royal game is bagged, the hunter waxes descriptive over that rabbit three ounces plumper than his neighbor's.)

Along with the current rampage for American painting — anything from early folk-art to the Hudson River School — there has been building an extensive bibliography. Viewed in the light of its contribution to

[1] *Painting and Painters: How to Look at a Picture — From Giotto to Chagall*, by Lionello Venturi, New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945. $3.50. 250 pages (53 full-page black-and-white reproductions).

[2] *William Sidney Mount*, by Bartlett Cowdrey and Hermann Warner Williams, Jr., New York. Published for the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Columbia University Press, 1944. 54 pages (78 illustrations).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Princeton

UNIVERSITY PRESS

THE SISTINE CEILING

By CHARLES DE TOLNAY. The second volume of Mr. de Tolnay's monumental work on the entire artistic activity of Michelangelo. In its review of the previous volume, *The Burlington Magazine* prophesied that the five volumes, "when completed, will be the standard work on Michelangelo". Now Mr. de Tolnay has applied his analytical and interpretive gifts, his unique scholarly resources, to the period in which the great Florentine produced the Sistine ceiling. *9x12 inches, 425 pages including 164 pages of collotype illustrations.* *$17.50*

LIGHT FROM THE ANCIENT PAST

By JACK FINEGAN. A connected account of the background of the Bible and of early Christianity as known through the discoveries of archaeology, covering the period 5000 B.C. to 500 A.D. Notable for its compactness, sense of continuity and variety of interest, it will delight the general reader as well as students of Near East civilization, ancient art and Hebrew-Christian archaeology. *Maps. 204 illustrations.* *$5.00*

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

By JEROME H. BUCKLEY. Henley has been pigeonholed as the author of *Invictus;* it has been forgotten that he was also a literary publicist, political propagandist, critic, lexicographer, and playwright—the Dr. Johnson of the 'nineties. This fully realized biography attempts a complete evaluation of his life and work, and relates him to the complex cultural milieu of late Victorian England. *Illustrated.* *$2.75*

At your bookstore

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Recommended Reading from LONGMANS FALL LIST

From My Library Walls

WILLIAM DANA ORCUTT

"In this charming and stimulating book are the memories of a wise and friendly man who has sought and found the beauty to be found in mind, heart, and spirit."—Alice Dixon Bond, *Boston Herald*. $3.00

John Henry Newman

CHARLES F. HARROLD
Ph. D., YALE '25

At once a masterful biography, a study in philosophy and theology, a treasury of Newman's writings, and a searching estimate of his literary development, by one who is himself a scholar and a man of letters. $3.50

At all bookstores

LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.
New York Toronto

Americana, special life endows the curiously stark and wistful *Artist in Iowa* [3] beyond the simple story of a celebrated mid-Western painter. It is an exceptional document. This biography of Grant Wood, innocently leaving Wood behind, conveys the larger canvas of a man and his unrich parched environment, to which poignancy is added by the unusual support and unrequited love of his home town.

Turning to *his* country in *The Last Flowering of the Middle Ages*,[4] the Belgian Baron van der Elst has of course a larger theme than has the American art historian. Snug at home among classic foundations, the Baron reveals with quiet pride the accomplishments of his towering ancestors. The scholar has an heroic story to tell, and for better or worse this good volume is patently a lesson for Americans. Like Venturi's *Painting and Painters*, it is worthy of general acceptance. Both European authors have been visiting America, and each is constrained in his pages to correct certain bizarre critical lapses which he seems to have encountered widely hereabouts. It is sad to report, however, that Baron van der Elst in one instance was exasperated to the point of slapping a child in a book meant for adults: he uses two pages of illustrations to prove the absurdity of the indiscriminate use of the label "primitive" for Flemish masters and awkward American folk-art painters alike.

Beginning at the exact spot where the author chooses to compare the aesthetic virtues of the rich little poor country with those of the poor big rich one, *The Last Flowering of the Middle Ages* offers at least one moral from the viewpoint of nationalism. When Americans are touched by this emotion they tend still to be the poor young colony; but in writing of his country's art, the Belgian or Frenchman or Italian does not feel impelled to use inflationary terms: he can afford such simplicity of statement as "The extraordinary vitality of Flemish art may be traced to the fact that that art had its roots in the good black earth of Flanders."

That sectionalism has been no stranger to

[3] *Artist in Iowa: A Life of Grant Wood*, by Darrell Garwood, New York. W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1944. $3.50. 259 pages (10 black-and-white reproductions).

[4] *The Last Flowering of the Middle Ages: People and Painters of Flanders*, by Baron Joseph van der Elst, Garden City, N. Y. Doubleday, Doran, and Company, Inc., 1944. $7.50. 127 pages (96 full-page black-and-white plates, 16 color plates).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Flemings, however, is brought out in the discussion concerning Hubert and Jan van Eyck and the world-famous *Adoration of the Lamb*. Although Baron van der Elst does not mention Emile Renders, who some ten years ago in Brussels devoted two volumes to this *cause célèbre* (and not only rejected Hubert's part in the painting but marshalled much in question of Hubert's very existence), he does lend credence to the theory that rivalry between Ghent and Bruges may have served to becloud the issue for modern investigators. His own brief dismissal of Hubert could hardly have surprised those familiar with the field as much as it did a number of reviewers.

With the sensational Van Gogh Discovery in 1935 as the main starting point, America, despite the nationalists, has provided a hearty welcome for scores of popular books, of all sizes and shapes and conditions, on the work of foreign artists.

Probably no single phenomenon of our cultural scene during the years between the first two world wars provided a more lively spectacle than the one which occurred when Vincent Van Gogh was arduously embraced by the largest exhibition of art enthusiasm ever witnessed in our country. This attack was incited by the Museum of Modern Art's travelling show and abetted by a book entitled *Lust for Life*.

It is significant, I think, that it was not Gauguin, the hooded sultry master, not the great Cézanne, nor even the warm ingratiating Renoir, but Van Gogh with his naive idealism, humble but paradoxically blazing, who first touched the American chord.

Van Gogh and the American public came closer together than any of the others because in Van Gogh's temperament a part of our national personality found a responsive vibration — a temperament of spontaneous enthusiasms and reversals, ingenuous paintings executed in the brightest of colors in the boldest light imaginable. Van Gogh was direct and his distortion was not sophisticated; his art was so unassuming that it gave the happy gift of permitting the ignorant to feel superior. He could be cherished where the art of greater masters seemed aloof.

Since then the flurry of new art books has grown toward a profitable and continual fall of multi-colored volumes, and if so far we have not matched the Europeans in quality of reproduction, with the development of new techniques we may expect rapid improvement. The quality of our criticism is a

JUST PUBLISHED

THE HISTORY OF

Phi Beta Kappa

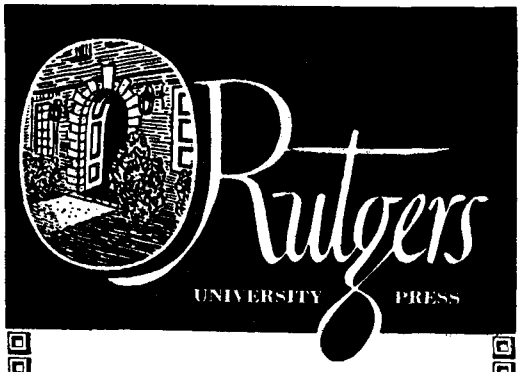
By OSCAR M. VOORHEES

The first authorized account of the origins and growth of Phi Beta Kappa from 1776 to the present, and of the many great men and women among those honored with membership. Including the detailed history of each of the chapters.

Profusely illustrated with rare prints and contemporary photographs.

At all bookstores, $4.00
CROWN PUBLISHERS
419 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. 16

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Just published

THE LAST POEMS OF

Philip Freneau

Edited by LEWIS LEARY

A collection of more than 50 poems by the Revolutionary poet of America, hitherto unpublished in book form. Limited to an edition of 500 copies, of which 450 copies are for sale. *$3.50*

Also by Lewis Leary

That Rascal Freneau:

A STUDY IN LITERARY FAILURE

"A man of indubitable interest in the annals of this Republic's early history has been brought forth into the light and presented as he undoubtedly was in life."—*New York Times.* *$5.00*

At all bookstores

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS

New Brunswick, N. J.

different matter. European publications of pre-World-War-II days were as far ahead of us in original critical and interpretative texts as they were in their color plates. If it is one of our inalienable privileges to decide what we shall buy, the fact does not absolve many art book publishers of a more exacting responsibility than they have recognized as theirs, if the function of art books is to instruct and give pleasure.

One of the recent exceptions is a pleasing museum piece, *Masterpieces of Painting from the National Gallery of Art*,[5] an oversized, color-plate volume. The technical quality of the reproductions is better than usual, and although the historical arrangement must include some examples of poor aesthetic value, the volume attains monumentality through the use of remarkably varied and evocative quotations. Insofar as the present resources of the National Gallery permit, seven centuries of art in the West are here developed without anxiety for national prestige.

Not all journeys are made over mountain and ocean, however, nor is all learning of the schoolroom. A singular form of internationalism, recognized entirely in subject matter, is surrealism. The fundamental symbols, ornaments of the deep-lands of the subconscious, are as available to the scholar as to the unvarnished poet; and the years of wrangling — whether in all decency an American could go abroad to paint or must plant his legs in the domestic scene — here becomes meaningless. Surrealism in truth is a kind of no-man's land where national borders are unknown along with other restrictions. Because in surrealism the free-running libido is not held accountable to the conventional art censor, anything can be said on canvas — and is. In *Abstract and Surrealist Art in America*,[6] for example, one of the artists represented has given us the opportunity of viewing an intimate statement of her life in Freudian terms, and the view includes perhaps the first frankly dedicated nude-to-the-waist female self-portrait in America.

Where the National Gallery book is launched into greater perspective by its illustration texts, *Abstract and Surrealist Art*

[5] *Masterpieces of Painting from the National Gallery of Art*, edited by Huntington Cairns and John Walker, New York. Random House, 1944. $6.50. 183 pages (85 full-page color plates).

[6] *Abstract and Surrealist Art in America*, by Sidney Janis, New York. Reynal and Hitchcock, Inc., 1944. $6.50. 146 pages (100 pages of illustration, including 10 color plates).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YALE

TRAIL TO CALIFORNIA

The Overland Journal of Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly

Edited with an Introduction by
DAVID M. POTTER

This unusually interesting journal tells of the experiences of Gold Rush emigrants from St. Joseph, Missouri until the arrival in California. It is detailed and explicit, and always maintains spontaneity and enthusiasm which make it consistently readable. Dr. Potter has furnished an interesting Introduction which focuses upon some of the more neglected aspects of the Gold Rush. $3.50

THE LIBERAL TRADITION

A Study of the Social and Spiritual Conditions of Freedom

WILLIAM A. ORTON

This book tells what liberalism is and of its place of fundamental importance in the life of any society where men are free or have the hope of freedom. It is an excellently written analysis of our great tradition and our current troubles. $3.50

THE ART OF NEWMAN'S *APOLOGIA*

WALTER E. HOUGHTON

It is appropriate that this careful study of the *Apologia* should appear in the centenary of that conversion which it was written to defend. $2.50

THE APOCRYPHAL LITERATURE

CHARLES CUTLER TORREY

A brief handbook describing the origin and character of each of the "apocryphal" books, and giving a concise history of their use in the Christian Church has long been needed, and is now provided by a famous scholar. $3.00

• • •

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

Christmas Catalogue Sent on Request

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS • New Haven, Connecticut

A lively, provocative volume —

THE GERMANS IN HISTORY

By PRINCE HUBERTUS ZU LOEWENSTEIN

Author of *After Hitler's Fall, Conquest of the Peace,* etc.

Prince Loewenstein outlines his personal views of the spirit of Europe and of the Germans in history in a controversial book that will stimulate thinking on the German problem. He makes no attempt to give a detailed account of recent German and foreign affairs, but rather to present events that must be regarded as typical in the course of history and that will contribute to our understanding of the Germans.

"Richly documented and excellently written book far superior to most recent treatises on German history. Highly recommended." — *The Library Journal.*

$5.00

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS • NEW YORK 27 • N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE JEWISH DILEMMA

By
ELMER BERGER

This highly controversial book, by a young American rabbi, who dissents from the Zionist, Jewish-nationalist position, will become a notable landmark in history, for it is the first book to state the case of the average Jew who is interested in living a free life in peace and friendship in the land of his birth, rather than being considered a member of a "strange people" which is "forever alien, homeless and uprooted" and which must have a National Homeland of its own in Palestine.

In *The Jewish Dilemma* Rabbi Berger poses the choice for Jews between a pattern of freedom and emancipation, and a pattern of segregation in an isolated Jewish State. He strongly takes issue with those who have dramatically assumed to speak for all Jews and regiment them into the Zionist nationalist ideology.

Whether as Jews facing problems or as Christians hoping to help Jews solve their common problems, readers will find this a book of utmost importance as background for thought and action.

$3.00 — At your bookstore — or from

The Devin-Adair Company
23 East 26 St., New York 10

in America presents an absorbing view of these two fields in quotations from the painters themselves. Although some are illuminating, a generous percentage attempt to leap universes in a terse sentence or two of profound incoherence. On the other hand, what convincing answer is there to the artist Chagall's candid query beneath his painting, *A Ma Femme*, a work of intense subjectivity: "If it took eleven years to make and to change this picture, how many years should I need to explain it in words?"

When one detaches the body of surrealist painting from the group philosophy, a great deal of confusion is at once dispelled. Mr. Janis does not do this successfully because he is an *aficionado*. He also wishes to build a case for American painting; and in title, blurb, and chapter headings, there is the unconscious national pull to divert the reader from the fact that the majority of painters inhabiting this book were born and art-conditioned abroad, while a number of the paintings reproduced are not to be found in this country.

Mr. Janis claims his to be the first book in America treating of surrealism (one must by inference draw the conclusion that he refers to surrealism as practiced in America). Although his chronological notes and glossary will be found helpful, the volume that approached this subject without partisanship would tell us that by clinical standards Bosch, Piero di Cosimo and Brueghel, among numerous early painters, offer fine accounts of "hallucination," "dream symbolism" and "fantasy" — and offer them through the courtesy of artistic competence. It might also tell us that fate with her usual adroitness chose Gertrude Stein in student days to cooperate in certain medical experiments on the associative method of writing; that the technical imprint of the discoveries and experiments of psychoanalysis are plain also in James Joyce; that Rimbaud, Lautréamont and the Marquis de Sade were gods of the writing surrealists who preceded and gave to the painters their platform; and, perhaps, that surrealism is often related to the decay of vegetables, a decay which one of the surrealists writing for all his kind relished dreamily.

Mr. Janis does not suggest the teeming background. Instead he passes on the claim of the brethren that surrealism is science — although the surrealists (using a formula of meticulous realism to depict paradox, chance and the dream world) perch their edifice on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the cornerstone of psychoanalytic technique, the practitioners of which have in turn learned to eschew the word as a booby trap. Loving provocation, the surrealists are *enfants provocateurs* who invoke the richest maze of jargonistic theory extant, in which capacity they are challenged solely by certain abstractionists.

When Lionello Venturi writes on art he is concerned to his utmost capacity, as a professional should be, with art values regardless of national origins. His latest volume, *Painters and Painting: How to Look at a Picture — From Giotto to Chagall*, reminds us if need be that there is more to criticism than being art historian, visiting lecturer or curator, although all these titles belong to Mr. Venturi's dossier. The stated aim of this work is "to stress the relativity of all the components of any painting." Such an ambitious goal is more than a single volume can attain. Nevertheless for most readers the book is probably the most valuable of its kind published in recent years.

Where, in one of the current jerry-built picture books,[7] Edward Alden Jewell fails so magnificently by his own confession to offer a reasonable introduction to Cézanne (one must respect his honesty, particularly since he provides a generous bibliography), Venturi easily supplies the necessary text, as he and numerous others have in the past, and because he thoroughly understands Cézanne's contribution he is able to apply this added knowledge tellingly in analyses of Giotto and others. And where Janis adds nothing original to his account of abstract painting, Venturi's short comparison of Picasso and Braque will be read with profit. He agrees with Kant that there is no science of art, only criticism of art, and he sensibly reminds us that the work itself should be viewed without consideration of artists' theories. One recalls a classic corroboration in the pronouncement of Master Seurat, who was positive that anybody could use his simple formula to produce art equal to his own.

Yet even Mr. Venturi is handicapped (and who is not?) by certain unproductive theories and prejudices. Hence he would have one believe that the analysis of a painter's character or the reconstruction of his personality can suggest, is even necessary to deter-

[7] *Paul Cézanne*, by Edward Alden Jewell, New York, The Hyperion Press, distributed by Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944. $3.00. 48 pages (40 black-and-white illustrations, 8 color plates).

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Letters and Private Papers of
WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

Volume I: 1817-1840
Volume II: 1841-1851
Volume III: 1852-1856
Volume IV: 1857-1864

Collected and edited by
GORDON N. RAY

This inclusive edition of Thackeray's correspondence and private papers leads to a new appraisal of the poet and his place in the history of English literature. Volumes I & II, now ready; Volumes III & IV will be published in the spring of 1946. *Illustrated. Vols. I & II, boxed.* $12.50

Why Smash Atoms?
by ARTHUR K. SOLOMON

A new, revised edition of the book that startled the world *five years* ago, now brought up to date to include the latest authoritative information on the atomic bomb. *The Journal of the American Chemical Society* said: "An excellent popular story of contemporary research in nuclear physics." $3.00

General Education in a Free Society
THE REPORT
OF THE HARVARD COMMITTEE

"The sanest, most practical statement of our national educational problems that I have yet seen."—CLAUDE FUESS. With an introduction by James Bryant Conant. $2.00

The Philippine Islands
by W. CAMERON FORBES

A new, condensed, modern version of Mr. Forbes' definitive two-volume work which the *New York Times* called "the best history of the Philippines that has yet been published." With maps, illustrations, new author's preface and introduction by President Osmeña. $5.00

At all bookstores

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
CAMBRIDGE 38 MASSACHUSETTS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mine, whether the man is a real artist. Here his own theorizing on the personality of Picasso leads him into deep water and causes him to say of the man who in 1937 painted *Guernica*, and who has been known the world over as a leader of the resistance movement in France, that "he does not seem interested in the changing trends of thought, feeling and imagination impinging on man today."

Venturi displays another form of prejudice when he says in effect that abstractions do not evoke emotional reactions, and denies abstractionism as a true art form. Yet the testimony of many sober, intelligent citizens shows that this work, once understood, provides for their kind a resourceful, eloquent language.

The exceptions, however, concern only a small part of this book. They are mentioned chiefly because they occur in connection with those controversial modern fields even the historical contents of which are still unknown to many capable of understanding. Otherwise, Mr. Venturi's equipment includes a flare of creativeness which illumines a broad and searching integrity. Such implements we look for in all interpretative writers, art historians or critics, but find in curiously few.

This sort of guidance is helpful in giving strength and direction to inherent perceptions which have not been fully awakened. Yet just as no partisan campaign, however impassioned, can command the appearance of talent or genius, so not even the distilled clarity of the world's best expository writers could alter our cultural future. Lying between instruction in aesthetics and perception is the necessity of "experiencing" art. In the search for ultimate perception and deep aesthetic growth, there remains an unexplored pocket, and we could do worse than look for it in our own genes.

Editor's Note

Space limitations have prevented the inclusion of our regular department, "Our Readers Comment." However, in the Spring number we expect to allot the usual space to letters from our readers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CARLETON COLLEGE

NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

LAURENCE M. GOULD, *President*

CARLETON is offering to returning service men and students entering from civilian life a unified program of liberal arts studies. This program seeks to integrate the various fields of learning and thereby to acquaint the student with that central body of knowledge which is valid for educated men and women. Beyond this area of general learning the student is provided various fields for further major studies.

For information address:
DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS
4 Leighton Hall Northfield, Minnesota

Seton Hill College

A LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

★

Greensburg, Pennsylvania

★

ALBION FOUNDED IN 1835

A four-year, co-educational, Christian liberal arts college with a normal enrollment of 800. Well established pre-professional training is offered for many careers. Known as "the college of distinguished alumni." Excellent equipment. Moderate expenses.

MICHIGAN'S BETA CHAPTER OF PHI BETA KAPPA

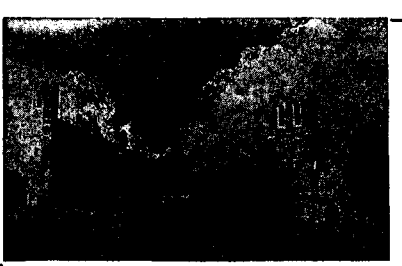
W. W. Whitehouse, *President* ALBION, MICHIGAN

ST. OLAF COLLEGE

Northfield, Minnesota

A fully accredited liberal arts college. Has well equipped science laboratories and a good library. Dormitories for men and for women. The largest privately-administered college in Minnesota.

DR. C. M. GRANSKOU, *President*



OAK GROVE

Emphasizes Preparation for College and Gracious, Purposeful Living. Music, Art, Dramatics. Joyous outdoor recreation features Winter Sports. Riding included. Beautiful new fireproof Buildings for one hundred girls.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Owen **Box 300, Vassalboro, Maine**

RANDOLPH-MACON ACADEMY

Front Royal, Virginia

Military • Accredited • 54th Year

In beautiful Shenandoah Valley at northern entrance to Skyline Drive. Prepares boys for college through intensive study methods. Fireproof dormitory includes classrooms and swimming pool. Gymnasium. Visitors welcome. 68 miles from Washington, D. C. For catalogue and folder address COL. JOHN C. BOGGS, *Principal*, Box S.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MARY HARDIN-BAYLOR

Fully accredited Liberal Arts college for women. Modernized curriculum to meet present-day career and homemaking needs. Distinctive Fine Arts. Central location in Texas. Mild winter climate. Chartered by Republic of Texas, 1845.

GORDON G. SINGLETON, PH.D., *President*
BELTON, TEXAS

PARK COLLEGE

Parkville, Missouri

Distinctive Features

A LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE WITH A DISTINCTIVE AND PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM OF EDUCATION

1. Honors Work for students in upper division
2. Comprehensive Examination in the field of concentration a requirement for the bachelor's degree
3. Modern Curriculum organized to meet the needs of students
4. Industrial Program to aid students in securing an education
5. Emphasis on instruction in the duties and practice of American citizenship
6. Modern buildings and laboratories

For further information write to George Irwin Rohrbough, Ped.D., *President, or to the Director of Admissions*

1830–1945

RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE

A Four-Year Liberal Arts College for Men

Member Southern Association of Schools and Colleges; on approved list of the Association of American Universities.

For catalog address
M. J. McNEAL, REGISTRAR
Ashland, Virginia

FOUNDED 1827

Lindenwood College

For Women

ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

Liberal Arts
Four-Year College

HARRY MOREHOUSE GAGE, *President*

EAGLEBROOK SCHOOL

FOR BOYS

Boys' junior boarding school. Grades 1 through 9. 130 Students. Excellent achievement under intimate faculty guidance. Preparation for best schools. Health, sports and hobbies enjoyed under ideal environment.

C. THURSTON CHASE, JR., M.A.
Deerfield **Massachusetts**

THE COLLEGE OF ST. CATHERINE

A Standard Liberal Arts College for Women

The only exclusively women's college in the Twin Cities. Awards the B.A., B.S., and B.S. in Library Science degrees.

APPROVED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES
CONDUCTED BY THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH

For Information address the Dean
Cleveland and Randolph **St. Paul 1, Minnesota**

EMMA WILLARD

Founded 1814

• A century-old reputation for sound scholarship. Every help is given a student, in preparing for college, to develop needed skills, self-reliance, and industry, and to acquire a rich background of information. Excellent equipment, including modern Science Building.

ANNE WELLINGTON, *Vassar*, Headmistress
CLEMEWELL LAY, *Wellesley*, Co-Headmistress
TROY, NEW YORK

Protect Your Home From

TUBERCULOSIS

Buy Christmas Seals

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

• THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE RUMFORD IMPRINT •

BOOKS • MAGAZINES • CATALOGS • COLOR PRINTING

Quality Printing

THE RUMFORD PRESS
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

BOOKS • MAGAZINES • CATALOGS • COLOR PRINTING

• THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE RUMFORD IMPRINT •

BALFOUR *Service* IS COMPLETE

To Educators . . .
High School and College Class Rings; Diplomas; Invitations; Class Pins.

To Business Executives . . .
Service Buttons; Citations; Memorials; Awards; Medals; Distinctive Stationery.

To Fraternity Members . . .
Gifts; Favors; Leather Goods; Stationery decorated with social fraternity crest. Free catalog of gifts.

L. G. **BALFOUR** COMPANY
Factories: **Attleboro, Massachusetts**

Is ours a "cut-flower" civilization?

read **D. ELTON TRUEBLOOD's**
answers in

The Predicament of Modern Man

The Western powers "have an ethic without a religion, whereas they are challenged by millions who have a religion without an ethic."

"If we had even the beginning of wisdom we should encourage our brightest men and women to devote themselves to the task of spiritual reconstruction."

"A very able and profound analysis of the spiritual situation of our time."
—REINHOLD NIEBUHR

At your bookseller $1.00

HARPER & BROTHERS

RUMFORD PRESS
CONCORD, N. H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MY 25 YEARS IN CHINA

By

John B. Powell

who was editor and publisher of the *China Weekly Review* in Shanghai, managing director of The China Press, and Far Eastern correspondent for American and British newspapers. He was repatriated in 1942.

REPORTING civil wars and invasions, kidnapped by bandits, imprisoned and tortured by the Japanese, in direct contact with political and economic developments throughout the Far East—"J. B." was always in the thick of things in China. His report of an exciting quarter-century there is also an informed appraisal of contemporary Chinese history. $3.50

Pursuit of Understanding

By Esther Cloudman Dunn

A warm and human account of a rich life, replete with incident and anecdote, this autobiography shows the meaning of education in this great American democracy, from the first exposure of the young mind to intellectual ideas through the constant, tireless search for new discoveries of the mind. $2.50

Wartime Mission in Spain, 1942-1945

By Carlton J. H. Hayes

The first fully authentic report of our policy in regard to Spain: a personal account of Ambassador Hayes' role in ensuring Spain's neutrality and aid to the Allies. Enlivened by descriptions of the country and portraits of Hayes' associates, it is dramatic and readable as well as significant. $3.00

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY • 60 Fifth Avenue, New York 11

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED